

**THE MORTGAGE  
FORECLOSED**





~~789~~

45¢







UNIV. OF CALIF. LIBRARY. LOS ANGELES



THE  
MORTGAGE FORECLOSED

A STORY OF THE FARM

BY  
E. H. THAYER

---

CHICAGO  
HOMEWOOD PUBLISHING COMPANY



COPYRIGHT, 1892.  
BY BELFORD-CLARKE CO.

---

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

---

COPYRIGHT, 1893.  
BY W. B. CONKEY COMPANY.

## CONTENTS.

---

CHAPTER I.	
THE ARRIVAL, . . . . .	9
CHAPTER II.	
FARMERS' WIVES BUYING GOODS, . . . . .	20
CHAPTER III.	
LEARNING SOMETHING VERY FAST, . . . . .	27
CHAPTER IV.	
THE WAY TO KEEP BOYS AND GIRLS AT THE FARM, . . . . .	37
CHAPTER V.	
THE FARMER—HIS WIFE—HIS DAUGHTER AND HIS SON, . . . . .	45
CHAPTER VI.	
LOVERS' TALK, . . . . .	53
CHAPTER VII.	
THE MORTGAGE ON THE FARM AND HOW IT GOT THERE. . . . .	61
CHAPTER VIII.	
HOW TO GET RID OF THE MORTGAGE ON THE FARM, . . . . .	74
CHAPTER IX.	
THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER, . . . . .	85
CHAPTER X.	
WHY SHE REFUSED TO MARRY MAJOR HOLBROOK, . . . . .	90
CHAPTER XI.	
LOVERS ON THE LAKE, . . . . .	101

CHAPTER XII.	
ON THE OCEAN—DANGEROUS RESEMBLANCE, . . .	108
CHAPTER XIII.	
THE SHIPWRECK, . . . . .	116
CHAPTER XIV.	
POISONED, . . . . .	122
CHAPTER XV.	
THE WILL IS A FORGERY, . . . . .	129
CHAPTER XVI.	
THE DECEPTION, . . . . .	138
CHAPTER XVII.	
IN AN UNKNOWN LAND, . . . . .	144
CHAPTER XVIII.	
THE WILL IN COURT, . . . . .	153
CHAPTER XIX.	
THE EVIDENCE, AND THE JUDGE'S ADVICE TO THE FARMERS, . . . . .	160
CHAPTER XX.	
THE THRILLING STORY TOLD BY MRS. WINTERS, . . .	174
CHAPTER XXI.	
GROUNDWIG'S INFAMOUS DEMAND, . . . . .	183
CHAPTER XXII.	
PERJURY EXPOSED, . . . . .	192
CHAPTER XXIII.	
FREE WOOL—THE VERDICT, . . . . .	205
CHAPTER XXIV.	
A GHOST'S DISPATCH TO A DEAD WOMAN, . . .	217
CHAPTER XXV.	
MANNING ENCOUNTERS GROUNDWIG, . . . . .	224



## CHAPTER XXVI.

GOD'S GIFT OF DREAMS, - - - - - 230

## CHAPTER XXVII.

I FORGOT! I FORGOT! - - - - - 236

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

IS IT CHARLES MANNING OR HARRY WINTERS? - - - 242

## CHAPTER XXIX.

SHALL THE IMPOSTER SUCCEED? - - - - - 250

## CHAPTER XXX.

CLEAR THE TRACK TO BRADFORD JUNCTION, - - - 256

## CHAPTER XXXI.

THE RACE AND THE RESCUE, - - - - - 264

## CHAPTER XXXII.

A RETROSPECT—A MARRIAGE—THE WHITE LIGHT, 273



# THE MORTGAGE FORECLOSED.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE ARRIVAL.

“Lightning expresses, even if they are on branch roads, don’t stop long at small places. So you will have to hurry up a little, my good woman. There now, step lively, my little man. No one to meet you? Well you will have no trouble in finding your friends, if you have any here, because you can peep in every door-way in the village in half an hour. All aboard.” Though there was no person in sight to go aboard, the call was made just the same, from force of habit. Off the train moved, and in a moment it rounded the curve, and was out of sight.

Something had so disturbed the lady as to cause her to weep. It may have been the conductor’s reference to friends that came not, or it may have been the sudden realization of the fact that she and her little boy were among strangers. The village was quiet and still, as if the houses were tenantless and the former occupants had gone to church or to a merry-making in the beautiful grove near by. The country store was open and the stranger, holding her boy tightly by the hand, walked in. The proprietor, finding she did not wish to purchase any goods, invited



her to a seat. She appeared bewildered, despondent and somewhat dazed, and was evidently wrapped up in thoughts she could not drive from her, even had she so desired. The bright-eyed, curly-haired, fair-cheeked, little fellow by her side sought to cheer and comfort her by soothing words, tenderly and sweetly spoken, and she soon roused from her seeming lethargy, and embracing her boy lovingly and endearingly, assured him that now, and at last, she was weeping for joy! They were the tears of peace, contentment and self-satisfaction. The tears of sorrow had given way to the tears of joy. Flowing almost together and at the self-same moment from the self-same fountain—yet between them was a gulf as wide as that which separates time from eternity.

The lady assured the store-keeper that she was a stranger in the village, that, in fact, she was a stranger in the State, and had neither friend nor relative, as far as she knew, in all the great, grand West. She and her boy would like to remain a few days, if she could find a home with some of the good people of the village. The man called in his wife, and telling her what the lady wished, the pleasant and cheerful little woman soon arranged that the new comers should occupy the spare room over the store and take their meals at the store-keeper's table.

Less than forty houses constituted the village, and yet had the strange lady searched the broad West throughout, she would nowhere have found a place better suited to her loneliness and friendlessness. She had traveled more than a thousand miles, that she

and her boy might not be separated by the strong arm of the law. Her guiding star had directed her to this beautiful valley, and, for the first time for weeks, she began to realize there was still much in life to live for.

The following morning she looked about the village, and was charmed with the beauty of the surrounding scenery. She admired its loveliness, and was delighted with the pretty, little crooked stream which ran along the valley, as if playing hide-and-seek with the adjacent, grassy bluffs, then, losing itself in the friendly groves, to reappear on the distant prairie, where, like a silvery serpent, it wriggled and twisted itself along until lost in the far-away lake.

Every day the stranger and her boy could be seen taking long walks in the country. With each passing hour she seemed more and more delighted with all she saw. She would stop at the farm houses to rest, and she never left without having made a friend. All the villagers came to know her, but none of them knew her history or cared to know it. They only knew that a woman of her intelligence and refinement, brought up in an Eastern home, amid wealth and affluence, must have a history of absorbing interest, or why should she leave home and kindred to dwell among strangers? But no one sought to share with her that secret. There was no village gossip to shun, no mutual friend into whose ears she might tell her story, if story she had to tell, nor did she want such a friend to listen and perhaps to betray—but all were friends now, all were neighbors, and all

delighted in making her contented and happy—a condition in life the kind-hearted and generous-natured farm people knew so well the value of.

Mrs. Winters might have told a story of thrilling interest, and yet her past life was like the placid waters of yonder stream, while the life she had yet to experience was like the seething, boiling cauldron in the turbulent river when at flood height, and after a night of tempest.

But just now she is exceedingly happy. Her mind was made up that her home should be in this beautiful valley. Here she would live and here she would die. In her walks she had often stopped at a farm house where it seemed difficult for the hard-working owner to make both ends meet at the end of the year. He had quite a large family to provide for, but the number of mouths to feed could not have contributed to his unfortunate circumstances had there not been a controlling cause elsewhere. The several members of the family were industrious workers, toiling from early morn until late at night. She had heard the farmer express a desire to sell his place. She thought to introduce the subject of buying and ascertain the cause of his ill luck, and if the circumstances were not too discouraging, she would purchase the farm.

“Farmer Chase,” said Mrs. Winters, one evening as the sturdy old yeoman came in from his work, “I have often heard you say you would like to sell your farm. I want to buy some such a place as this, but before I talk of buying I want to know why you wish to sell.”

“I will tell you candidly. I have had so much bad



luck in the past eight or ten years that I have been compelled to run in debt, mortgage my farm, and I see no other way than to consent to its foreclosure, let the holder of the mortgage have the farm, and I will pick up the little I may be able to save, take my family and start for the far West, where I can enter a homestead and begin life again way down at the bottom."

"Farmer Chase, you say you have had bad luck. In what way has such luck manifested itself? You have a nice farm, the crops look well, the yield bids fair to be large, you and your boys do all the farm work, pray tell me about your bad luck—your crops have not failed have they?"

"No. I have been very fortunate in raising good crops every season, my land is exceedingly fertile and yields most bountifully, but the price of farm produce has been so low right along, year after year, that really the profit has not been sufficient for me to buy those necessaries of life which we must have to exist even half-way comfortably."

"Then it is not the farm that is to blame for your ill luck, but something else that happens after you and your family and the farm have all done their duty. Have you any idea why the price of farm produce is not sufficient to support your hard-working family?"

"No, I have not," continued Farmer Chase; "some six years ago I put a mortgage of five hundred dollars on my farm. I have paid the interest every year, but I have been compelled to increase the amount of the mortgage until at the present time it is nine hundred

and fifty dollars. I have been running behind about one hundred and fifty dollars each year, and I see no way of even starting again on a farm unless I can sell my property for enough more than the mortgage to enable me to buy an emigrant's outfit and sufficient supplies to last my family until we can get settled again. You know when a farm is mortgaged within a few hundred dollars of its selling value, it is difficult to realize any more than the amount of the mortgage. A foreclosure usually wipes out the farmer's entire possessions, and I know of scores of cases where farmers who have spent a quarter of a century in hard work on the farm were compelled to part with all they had and go out into the world, wife, children and all, homeless and penniless. This may be my fate."

"Farmer Chase, something is wrong, radically wrong somewhere, when in a rich and fertile farming country like this, where the crops never fail and the yield is ever bountiful, that men and their families must, after years of incessant toil, give up the fruits of their hard labor and move outside of civilization and begin life over again. It is not the soil you say that is to blame for this thing, nor is it the lack of proper management of the farm, nor is it because willing hands do not toil and dig the livelong day through, and oftentimes far into the night. Farmer Chase, I know the cause as well as I know the leaves on yonder oak. I know that the farmers of this great West, like the operatives in the New England factories, are being robbed of their earnings by the unjust tariff laws of the land. But I will not discuss the cause of your

ill luck just now. I like your farm. I know it will suit me. I have a little income from other sources and will not be dependent entirely on the profits of the farm for a livelihood. Your price is reasonable, and you can make me the deed, and if you desire to give possession at once I will take your crops at a fair valuation."

The bargain being closed, Farmer Chase gathered around him those members of his family too young to go into the world by themselves and earn a living, and at once made preparations for seeking a new home. They visited the little church-yard and bade a long farewell to the loved ones sleeping there; they took a last look at the little church where the babes had been christened and baptized; one fond gaze at the red school-house, a tearful adieu to the old homestead, then embracing the grown-up children who would stay and struggle on to make a living, hoping to pull through, and a cordial handshake with the neighbors, a trembling good-bye to all, and Farmer Chase, at the age of three-score years, started his little emigrant train on a journey of seven hundred miles, to make himself a new home in a new land. Some of the neighbors who went a piece with the old man, to encourage and cheer him, said it was a generous country that would donate to unfortunate farmers land for a homestead.

"A generous government indeed," remarked Mrs. Winters, "to enact unjust and oppressive laws that make it impossible for the average farmer to earn a living on the farm. Laws that force him to mortgage his home to obtain the means to support his family,



and when sold out on the mortgage, and turned adrift, offer him a quarter section of land in the wilderness almost a thousand miles away!"

This remark was not directed to any one, and no one replied. The old farmers looked at each other in amazement. Here was a woman talking, and it looked as though she knew what she was talking about. Some of her listeners were but other Farmer Chases. They wanted to hear more on a subject which came so near their own homes, and they had not long to wait.

"Why not," continued Mrs. Winters, "take off that part of the tax on the necessaries of life, which goes as donations into the pockets of the wealthy manufacturer, and, by so doing, permit the farmer to spend his old age where he has earned the moral right to spend it, on the homestead God made for him, under the roof where he had raised his family, instead of robbing him of his earnings by an unjust tariff on everything he buys? Why drain his brow of the sweat which comes from honest toil and then send him adrift to pick up a stray piece of land outside the borders of civilization where he has the choice of working himself to death or starving to death?"

"It may be generous on the part of the government to so donate its farms, but it would be far more just were it to repeal some of the laws which are driving those farmers to accept of its bounty. It would only require a reduction of about one-half the tax on the necessaries with the tariff on raw material abolished, to enable nearly every farmer in the land, whose home is mortgaged, to look ahead to the time when

he would be out of debt, with the prospect of accumulating a competence for his family in case of his death, or laying by something for himself in his old age."

A bad feature in connection with Farmer Chase's forced removal, was the fact that he was leaving behind two sons and one daughter, all of whom were married and all struggling to keep their heads above water, and the old farmer could not see why his fate might not be theirs in a few seasons more. If things did not improve, if farm produce brought no better prices, and if the necessaries of life kept up, they, too, would be compelled to submit to foreclosure of the mortgages on their farms and make new homes in the new West. While there were many farmers in that neighborhood comfortably fixed and well to do, yet to many others the outlook was gloomy in the extreme, not only for the time being but for the future. So when any person came among them, even though a woman, and gave sensible reasons with the proof, for so much ill luck and bad fortune, all were ready to listen, though many were slow to believe and act.

Mrs. Winters bought that particular farm, not only for a home, but its seclusion suited her feelings, and it afforded her a hiding place, as she often times termed it, from a mysterious somebody, whose coming she thought improbable and yet constantly dreaded; and the location was in the very midst of the dear people for whose welfare, as a class, she had determined to devote her life's work.

She was, however, unused to a farm. Since her

school days she had busied herself, as a labor of love, in looking after the comfort and happiness of factory operatives, and, thus engaged, she had familiarized herself with many of the labor problems, some of which she had solved and settled in her own mind and to her own satisfaction. She was a firm believer in the theory that a high tariff for the purposes of protection, not only did not benefit labor but was a positive injury to it. She had studied the subject in all the phases it presented itself, and the more she studied and investigated the practical application of it as exhibited in the industries specially protected by the tariff, the more firmly impressed was she that labor, on the farm or in the factory, in the shop or mill or mines, had nothing to gain by a high tariff, but everything to lose.

The correctness of these sentiments and these doctrines was so firmly imbedded in her mind, that, when compelled on a moment's warning to snatch her child from sudden danger and flee from her home and the graves of her kindred, it did not take her long, after reaching her new home, to realize that the huge industrial interests of the great agricultural regions of the West were fettered and shackled by the same galling chains that the tariff was forging in the East. She made up her mind that, though woman she was, she had a mission to perform among the farmers, and perform it she would, no matter how great the sacrifice.

The farm Mrs. Winters purchased was on a side hill, with the buildings very near the brow. From the house to the river, which meandered in plain



sight, was a gentle slope. Had the place been selected for its picturesqueness and beautiful natural scenery, it would have been all that a devoted admirer of nature could have desired. The highway ran about a hundred rods from the house, and between the house and the road was a wide lane, on each side of which was a row of thrifty maple trees. The river was not a large one, though it was dignified with a large name. But it was a beautiful stream, and when not disturbed by the spring and fall freshets, was as placid and smooth as crystal. The eye seemed never to weary in gazing upon the scarcely perceptible current, as it moved so gently and so noiselessly along, while its banks, lined with luxuriant grasses, reflected beneath the waters, apparently resting against the shadows of the clouds, made a picture of exceeding loveliness. A short distance on the prairie was quite a large body of water, which was known as the lake. On the sides of the lake was a slope or beach, formed by the sand washed from the water's bed by the wind of summer and ice of winter. Nestled so gracefully in the lap of the prairie, the lake seemed to be only a temporary visitor, and one might easily imagine that, when completely rested, it would start off for other climes where it might refresh other prairies and gladden other hearts.

## CHAPTER II.

### FARMERS' WIVES BUY GOODS, AND WHY THEY DIDN'T BUY ALL THEY NEEDED.

The nearest neighbor Mrs. Winters had, lived a mile distant. He was a well-to-do farmer, who had served his country in the Civil War, and at its close married the girl of his boyhood's choice and moved from his Eastern home into the settlement. His farm was a large one for that section of the West, and having brought considerable money with him, he accumulated more each year, until he was considered one of the most forehanded men in the county. He had been fortunate in his investments and lucky in his speculations, and indeed everything he touched seemed to turn to gold. He interested himself in everything that was going on around him, and took the laboring oar in pushing neighborhood improvements. He contributed quite largely toward building the only church in the settlement, he subscribed generously toward the preacher's salary, and he voluntarily added quite a sum to his own taxes, to make larger and more comfortable the contemplated new school-house. He exhibited much taste in the construction of the buildings on his farm, and was constantly suggesting to the neighbors how easily and cheaply certain improvements could be made in and about their homes. His wife was a lady of culture and refinement, taking pride in assisting her hus-

band in carrying out his plans, and encouraging the neighbors to do numerous little things which served to make home pleasanter and more attractive to its inmates. A little, curly-headed, golden-haired girl, with the blackest of black eyes, and the reddest of red cheeks, and the prettiest little mouth one would care to see, who was now fairly in the fourth summer of her little life, made up the balance of Major Stephen Holbrook's family.

It did not take long for the two families to become quite intimately acquainted. Their children, Henry and Mary, often played together, and the two women frequently met at each other's houses, and oftentimes planned many a pleasant surprise for those neighbors whose circumstances in life were not the most prosperous.

When Mary was ten years old, her mother died. Left at this early age without a mother's tender care, she naturally looked to Mrs. Winters as the person she had the right to love as a mother, and Mrs. Winters returned that love in the most generous manner.

Mrs. Winters never grew weary in her efforts to help lighten the burdens of her neighbors. The more she went among them and familiarized herself with their manner of getting along, the more she was confirmed in the opinion that the difficulty in the way of their prosperity was not the fault of the farmer or his family.

She saw that the farmer worked long hours, and all the members of his family who were large enough to count as help, performed their share of the drudgery. The husband followed the plow from sun-



rise, through all the long day, to sunset, and the wife would be up and at work with the break of morning, and toil through all the hours, almost without a moment's rest, until bedtime. The children had their tasks to do, which kept them busy until the hours of school, and upon their return in the evening they would take up the unfinished work of the morning, and never complete it, until they were children no longer. The same drudgery, over and over, day after day, the same routine of work, the only variation or change was simply from one hard task to a harder one.

Mrs. Winters pitied these families. She felt that the farmer and his family earned rest, recreation and luxuries, which some one else was enjoying. She knew that half this labor on the farm went to maintain the nation's policy of a high protected tariff. To use the fruits of the farmer's toil for such a purpose was extortion, made in the name of law, and not made because the necessities of the government required it. She had resolved she would do her part in opening the eyes of the farmers and the members of their families to the great outrage the tariff was inflicting upon them. So she set to work to convince them that the remedy was in their own hands, and that they were themselves to blame if they did not apply it and become free men and free women.

One morning, late in the fall, several neighbors were going to town to purchase family supplies, more particularly clothing for winter wear, and Mrs. Winters, desiring to make a few purchases, joined the party. They found the stores largely stocked

with goods, so much so that they expressed surprise at the merchant's affording to buy so heavily, because they knew trade was dull and but few goods were being sold.

One of the ladies, Mrs. Wilber, desired to purchase three cloaks, one for herself and one for each of her two daughters. The price of each cloak was nine dollars. This price admitted of her buying but two garments, remarking, as she paid the money, that one of the daughters would have to wait another year for a cloak. She bought thirty-six yards of carpet for thirty dollars, and she paid sixteen dollars for woolen dress goods. Twelve dollars was spent for hosiery and underwear. The entire bill came to seventy-six dollars. There were quite a number of articles of real necessity Mrs. Wilber needed for herself and family, and she did not know how they could get along without them. She had bought a third less carpeting than the rooms required, she was compelled to get along with two cloaks when three were just as essential as two, and she had purchased less than one-half the underwear she had expected to. She sat down on a bench, half sick and completely discouraged. Things she had promised the children, and things that were necessary to make them fairly comfortable during the winter, she could not buy, because of the high prices she paid for the goods she did buy, and which she must have, and for the purchase of which she had been saving money the whole year long.

Mrs. Wilber, sat there sad and in tears. Mrs. Winters went to her, and readily divining the cause

of the tears, sought to comfort her. She told her that another year things might come round all right, so that by practicing self-denial a few more months, she could make the purchases she and her family so much needed.

“There is not the least bit of comfort or consolation,” remarked Mrs. Wilber, “in your words. It is the same thing, over and over, each year. I am forced to scrimp and manage and economize and work and save all the year through, expecting to make my children more comfortable and supply them with the wearing apparel they actually need and should have. I encourage them to stay with me on the farm, by promising them that things will be better another year, and that we have passed through the worst. Nor do I know who is to blame. The crops are excellent every year. Our granaries and barns are full. Our stock always do well and are as fat as anybody’s, and sell as well as any of our neighbor’s. But the prices keep low, and the things we have to sell bring such a slight advance on the cost of producing them, that there is very little left with which to buy necessaries for the family. The Lord is certainly good to us. Yet I see no silver lining to the cloud that constantly hovers over my head. I thought this year, when the crops yielded so bountifully, that I could certainly buy those articles my children so much needed and which they had gone without until to go without longer means shame and suffering for them and for me. I find I can not do it. I tell you, Mrs. Winters, I am discouraged. I am willing to work like a slave—to wear my finger



ends to the bone—to welcome sunken cheeks and pale lips and fevered brow—to make any sacrifice that will secure for me and mine these necessaries that we so much need. I see no prospect, even in the future, for better things. The farm is mortgaged, and no matter what comforts the family must be deprived of, the interest must be paid, and one of these days I can plainly see the home must be sold to pay off the mortgage.”

“Mrs. Wilber, I feel for you, and I pity you from the bottom of my heart,” replied Mrs. Winters, “and while you look about you in vain to find where the blame lies, let me tell you that you yourself are partly to blame for—”

“I partly to blame for my children being illy clad and illy fed, Mrs. Winters! I to blame for the sacrifices we all make that we may live comfortably! I who toil more hours than a slave toils for his master! I who every day deny myself things which are necessary to my health and comfort, I who—”

“Now, wait a moment, Mrs. Wilber, and hear me through. I am sorry I have wounded your feelings, but it is only in wounds sometimes that the remedy can be applied. You have now reached that point in making self-denials that you ought to be willing to listen. Will you hear me?”

“I know you are a sensible woman, Mrs. Winters, and that you have gone through lots of trouble, and I have no doubt your experience will be of great benefit to me, and I assure you I will not only listen to what you have to say, but if you can point out where I have been guilty of negligence, or where I

have made mistakes, I will be ever ready to admit my faults and do better as I learn how to do better."

"Mrs. Wilber, you have nothing to grieve at or lament over. You have been a noble and true wife and a most devoted mother. When I said you were partly to blame for the trouble which seems to overwhelm you, I meant you had not used the influence you possess to remove the cause of your trouble."

Mrs. Wilber was perplexed. She did not take kindly to the idea that she was in any manner to blame for the ill luck which befell her family. Nor could she understand wherein she could wield an influence that could help to rid her of the trouble she had complained of. So she made bold to ask Mrs. Winters to explain her meaning.

## CHAPTER III.

### LEARNING SOMETHING VERY FAST.

“You speak, Mrs. Winters, of my influence,” said Mrs. Wilber, “I did not suppose I had any influence except such as grows out of the drudgery in my kitchen. Pray tell me in what way a poor, weak woman like me has any other influence—with whom and how can I use it?”

“I will tell you,” replied Mrs. Winters, “and I want you to mark well what I tell you. You have just purchased a bill of goods. You are sorely disappointed at the prices, and at your inability to buy more for your money, and you feel the worse because you know you can not treat all the members of your family alike. You have bought two cloaks, and you needed three as much as you did two. You paid eighteen dollars for the two. Now, Mrs. Wilber, the tax levied by the government on those two cloaks amounts to ten dollars and eighty cents. The tax on the carpet you bought is fifteen dollars, on the dress goods six dollars and seventy-two cents, and on the underwear, five dollars and forty cents, making a total tax on your purchases of thirty-seven dollars and ninety-two cents. The greater portion of this tax you have just paid is for the purpose of protecting the manufacturers of those goods against the manufacturers of other countries. If you were permitted to buy those goods wherever you wanted to,

you would save three dollars on each cloak, twenty-five cents on each yard of carpet and thirty cents on each dollar's worth of dress goods and underwear you use."

"I do not understand you," remarked Mrs. Wilber. "Is not this a free country, and have I not the right to go where I please and spend my own money?"

"Yes, you have," said Mrs. Winters. "You buy of the country merchant. He is not permitted to go outside the United States and buy the goods he sells you without paying a large tax on the things he buys, and this tax he must charge to his customers."

"Even admitting that, how do you make out," said Mrs. Wilber, "that if I could buy where I wanted to, I could save three dollars on a cloak and twenty-five cents on each yard of carpet, and yet pay that tax?"

"This is the way it is done," answered Mrs. Winters. "The amount you would then save does not go to the government, but to the wealthy manufacturers who make the goods you have just bought. They have persuaded the law-makers that they could not operate their factories if the people of the United States were not compelled to buy of them, and in order that they should so buy, a tax is put so high on goods made in foreign countries, that you and everybody else in the United States must pay for the American-made goods you buy, the selling price of Europe with an average tariff of some forty-seven per cent. added. In other words the tax on that cloak is five dollars and forty cents—two dollars and



forty cents, if it is of foreign make, goes to the government to help pay the current expenses, and three dollars goes to the American manufacturer. Or in other words if the tax on the cloak was only a government tax for the use of the government, you would save three dollars. That three dollars is your gift outright to protect a man in a business that he insists will not be profitable unless you give him that three dollars, and you are compelled to pay very nearly a like proportion to him or somebody else on nearly everything you buy."

"Don't the manufacturers of the goods I have bought make them as cheap as any other country can?"

"No! Not in every instance. Other countries, as a rule, pay no tax on raw material, which is the most expensive item in the cost of the goods. To illustrate: Were the tax taken off wool and the tax on woolen goods reduced one-half, you could have bought the goods for which you paid seventy-six dollars for about fifty dollars, and still contribute some fifteen dollars outright to the manufacturer for his protection. Such contributions would enable him to make his business so profitable and his sales so extensive that he could pay the highest wages to his workmen and receive an income from his capital of ten times the per cent. your husband receives on his investment.

"This reduction of the tax on those few articles you have purchased would give you twenty-six dollars more to spend, enabling you to buy the other cloak your daughter so badly needs, and instead of

going home to explain to the other members of your family the reason you could not bring them the things they so much wanted and expected, you could make their hearts rejoice when you untied the bundles and laid before them the goods so necessary to their comfort and pleasure.

“Such a reduction of the tax and the admission of wool free, would have permitted the manufacturer to sell to one family one other cloak, fifteen yards more of carpet and sixteen or eighteen dollars worth more of woolen goods and underwear. It is more than probable there are one hundred such customers situated as you are, to one who can buy what they want, so instead of there being an over production of such goods, and the discharging of hands for want of employment, there would be a demand at home and abroad for all the goods made and steady work for all who wished to work. Instead of so many woolen mills going into bankruptcy, they would be running full time and giving employment to thousands of operatives that are now idle, and making a better home market for farm produce.”

“All you say looks reasonable,” said Mrs. Wilber, “and I believe every word of it. I would be awful dull if I couldn’t see that such a tax is unjust and unnecessary, and that it is no better than robbery to take what belongs to my family and what we together have earned, and give it to some rich manufacturer. Now that is wicked. The greater part of what the government demands it don’t need, and if it did it don’t get it. I can’t see any reason why the manufacturer couldn’t get along just as well

with the tax largely reduced. He could if he had to. I suppose he wouldn't accumulate a big fortune quite so rapidly. But for that reason ought my family to go without the necessaries and comforts of life? But pray tell me how I can help to change such a wicked law. I don't know one of the men who make the laws; and if I did I wouldn't dare to go to him and tell him I thought the law was the outrage on the farmers you prove it to be."

"I am coming to that pretty soon," replied Mrs. Winters, "but before I do, there are some other points I desire to present to you, and as I have no doubt the shopping experience to-day of the other ladies is similar to yours, I will wait until we are ready to ride home, and then I will answer your questions and explain other matters connected with your purchases."

It did not take Mrs. Winters long to ascertain that not one of the three ladies making up the party was satisfied with the purchases they had made. The story of each was Mrs. Wilber's story over again. When Mrs. Winters told them it was the high tariff or tax which prevented their buying the goods they needed and expected to buy with the money they had, they were eager to listen.

"I tell you, ladies, you wives of farmers," Mrs. Winters proceeded, "it is this high tariff you hear so much about, and which you take so little interest in, because you think you can't understand it, that is preventing you from clothing your family comfortably and supplying them with the necessaries of life. I need only refer to your own experience of

to-day to illustrate the truth of this statement. Not an article have you bought but the tax was from forty to seventy per cent., and at least one hundred dollars of the three hundred you have spent goes as a gift outright into the pockets of the wealthy manufacturers, while only a small portion goes into the treasury of the government."

"But my dear Mrs. Winters," interposed Mrs. Tyler, "is not this tax necessary to permit the manufacturers to pay fair wages to their employes, and must not the laborer have living wages to enable him to buy what the farmer has to sell? Had we farmers' wives not better pay this tax than not have a home market for farm produce?"

"I admit," responded Mrs. Winters, "that is the argument constantly dinned into the farmers' ears by the manufacturers, but it has no weight at all when put along side of cold facts. A few days since Gregory & Jones, the proprietors of an extensive cloak and shawl factory, went into bankruptcy, throwing eight hundred men and women out of employment. Why was it? For the very reason Mrs. Wilber was compelled to get along with two cloaks for her family when she ought to have had three. She could not buy the three because they were taxed beyond her means in order to protect the manufacturer, who in turn failed because he could not sell the goods he manufactured. It didn't seem to be protection he needed, but customers, and he was protected so much and there was so much of a tax on everything that entered into the make up of his goods, that even all the protection he received only



resulted in his asking so much for his goods that the masses of the people could not buy them. Gregory & Jones were protected into bankruptcy. Protection, it will be seen, prevents other countries from bringing those goods here, and it also prevents the home manufacturer from making goods that everybody could buy. If protection shuts up the woolen mills whereby an hundred thousand operatives are forced into idleness, how does such protection help the farmer to sell his produce? Could these woolen factories have the privilege of buying the raw material they use wherever it is the cheapest, they could sell their goods as cheap as any other country, and they could sell so cheap that they would supply other countries with woolen goods instead of having other countries supply this, as they do every year with millions of dollars' worth.

“Gregory & Jones would no doubt have sold annually half a million dollars' worth more of cloaks and shawls, could the price have been thirty per cent. less, which they could have done with the tax removed from wool, and thus not only have prevented their failure, but they would have done a profitable business, and the eight hundred employes would have been kept at work. The retail merchant would not have his shelves loaded with unsold goods, and best of all, the people for whom such goods are manufactured could have bought them.

“Every neighborhood has scores of families situated as you ladies are as regards making such purchases. Multiply your number by such thousands, and the manufacturer will begin to realize that there

is more profit in taking the tax off his raw material and making his goods so cheap as to bring them within the reach of the great majority of people, than in any benefit he can derive from a high protective tariff.

“Now, ladies, believe me. I have investigated this matter with the greatest possible desire to get at the facts. While I know there are many intricate questions connected with the operation of the tariff, which are difficult to understand, and concerning which people may honestly differ; yet there is no denying the truth, which stands out boldly and runs through the entire schedule of articles whose price is increased by the tariff, that the farmers are being taxed to death for the benefit of a few individuals, without, in any shape or manner, directly or indirectly, receiving the least benefit to themselves.

“The farmers pay two or three cents tax on every pound of sugar they buy. There is a tax on nearly everything not raised on the farm that goes into the pantry or on the dinner table. A tax on medicines, drugs, dye stuffs, spices, paints, glass and oil. Tax on brooms, brushes, thread, parasols, furs, school books, paper, pens and newspapers. Tax on clothing, bedding, blankets, shawls, cloaks, wraps, underwear, cotton cloth and table linen. Tax on tin plate, which is a special burden on the farmer, because there are so many articles about the farm that tin is used for. The tin pans for milk and cream, tin cups and tin cans for canning the vast soil products, such as potatoes, tomatoes, beans, milk, meats and fruits of all kinds. And there is not a pound of tin mined in America. Every agri-

cultural implement, from the hoe to the threshing machine, is taxed. If the object of the present tariff system were to oppress the farmer, there is no way to improve it. It is absolutely perfect.

“Farmers’ wives, let me say to you that it is this tax for protection of the manufacturer which is undermining your health and keeping you doing a slave’s work. It is this tax which makes your daughters dissatisfied with farm life and is driving your sons to the cities and towns. It is this tax which has put the mortgage on your farm, and unless the change comes which is contemplated by the friends of tariff reform, the tax will compel the sale of the farm and turn its occupants, homeless and houseless, in their old age, out into the world to commence life anew. Hardly a grievance the farmer can complain of but the cause may be traced to the tariff. Hardly a wish ungratified but the tariff is to blame.

“The farmer’s family is entitled to something more than a bare living. They can not be content with simply keeping out of debt. If there is no mortgage on the farm, that is no reason why they should be willing to contribute a portion of their earnings to make the rich man richer. There are manifold comforts, conveniences and luxuries which they would enjoy and could have were the principles of tariff reform to prevail. His children could be better educated. His daughters may desire to dress a little better than they are in the habit of doing, and they should be permitted to do so. The boys are entitled to frequent holidays and a liberal amount of spending money, and they should have both. The farmer and his wife should be relieved of

the drudgery now so common, and more frequent visits with relatives and friends should be exchanged. The truth is, the tariff deprives the average farmer and his family of fully one-half the comforts and pleasures of life which they ought to enjoy."

"Pray tell us, Mrs. Winters," said Mrs. Tyler, who had grown quite interested, "what we can do to get rid of this horrid tax?"

"Do? You can do everything," said Mrs. Winters. "Mrs. Wilber has asked me the same question, and it is time farmers' wives everywhere were interesting themselves in the question and the answer. I will tell you. Go home and quietly and calmly talk this matter over with your husband and your grown-up boys. Keep before them constantly the fact that the tariff is a tax which is robbing them of a greater portion of the profits of the farm. Tell them it is a mill-stone around their necks, making their lives miserable, and that it will drag them from bad to worse, unless they exert themselves to throw it off. Bid them, as they love their families and would see them lifted out of the perpetual gloom which surrounds the home and the farm, to vote for men for office who favor tariff reform. If their party does not pronounce for the reform, tell them they have clung to their party long enough. Tell them the question is no longer 'shall the party win,' but 'shall the farm prosper.' Convince them, as you easily can, that the party which stands for a high protective tariff must go or the farm must go!

"It rests with you, wives, mothers and daughters, in a measure, to decide which shall stay and which shall go."



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE WAY TO KEEP BOYS AND GIRLS ON THE FARM.

Henry Winters was eight years old when he began going to school at the country school-house, located about a mile from his home. He was quick and eager to learn, and he had no difficulty in keeping at the head of his class. There was, however, no one pupil any more a favorite with the teacher or with schoolmates, than another. A country school-house filled with farmers' children is an excellent place to find absolute equality. No one scholar is better than another. Not a shade of aristocracy is there. The books and slate and writing material of each pupil are alike. The little tin pails and willow baskets, which contain the dinner, are similar. And in a much more marked degree than in the city the intellects are alike. None are dull. All are bright. There may be more awkwardness in the school-room in the country than in the town, but it is the awkwardness of nature, and it has much to do with defining the line between the children brought up on the farm and those brought up in the city.

It is not claimed that this particular school was made up of children absolutely good. There were bad boys there—boys who were mischievous, boys who were vicious, and boys who were ungovernable. There were girls with fiery tempers, ugly dispositions and evil natures. It may be that it takes such chil-

dren to rob the school-room of the dull and prosy monotony which makes sluggards and idlers. If directed in the proper channel, and taken in hand at the right time, and not allowed too much freedom or too wide a scope in which to expand, the bad cropping out in a school-room of bright, active, zealous, earnest little children may be turned to excellent purposes.

At this school Henry Winters and Mary Holbrook received their early book education. There was nothing peculiar about these children. Their youthful lives were the lives of the vast concourse of such children who preceded them in the school-room. It happened that in their early youth they became fond of each other. Together they walked hand in hand to and from their studies. They had their little quarrels, but they were brief ones. They had their days and weeks of separation, and they were sad ones. And even in early childhood when chasing butterflies and gathering wild flowers, and long before either knew the meaning of love, they were lovers—devoted, constant and true. The love of little children! When in all the long life is love purer, nobler or dearer?

As a rule on the farm, too much work is required of children during school-days. Parents do not make allowance for the exhaustive nature of the tasks put upon their boys and girls in the school-room. Keeping still is tiresome, learning lessons is tedious, and being as good as the teacher requires is wearisome. In the morning before starting for school the children's task should be light and easy,

and as little of it as possible—less of it than is customary. Upon their return in the afternoon, instead of being put to doing chores about the house and kept busy until supper time, they should have their hours of rest and recreation, and within certain prescribed rules allowed to go and come at will.

Much of the dissatisfaction with the farm and farm life commences in early childhood, and comes from the drudgery imposed upon the children. This drudgery grows with their growth, and dislike for the farm increases with their years, and hence it has come almost to be the rule and not the exception, that boys and girls brought up on the farm, particularly the boys, insist on leaving home as soon as they become of age, and going to the city or town to live.

In the majority of cases parents mean well, and they would do differently if their circumstances would permit. They claim, and oftentimes justly, that the children must work between school hours and during vacation, in order that the family may make the two ends meet. That claim is most always a valid one, which fact being admitted, there is something wrong somewhere to account for such a condition. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" was spoken of man, not of woman or children. If the cause of this toil and drudgery by the young members of the household is traced to dire necessity, then there is something out of gear somewhere, which requires the attention of somebody. If farm life is so irksome, so exacting and so obnoxious as to drive the rising generation into the cities, then

it behooves good men everywhere to find the remedy and if possible apply it. The evil is surely becoming a serious one, and every year is growing, and already stands in the way of that honest and economical management of the affairs of both state and nation, which the people have the right to expect, if the rulers are to be men of strong hands, healthy brains, stout hearts and noble manhood.

A majority of the men who make the laws and execute them should come from the farm, the workshop and the ranks of the day laborer. Physical development is as essential as mental, in honest rulers. It takes muscle as well as brain to make the laws the best adapted to the welfare of a muscular and brainy race.

The farm is the nation's hope and strength and its grandest bulwark. If the farm decays, liberty and law must become part and parcel of the ruins. Instead of oppressing the farmer the law should bolster him up. Does it? Does it not rather bind and fetter him and hold him in the coils, oppress and strangle him, singling him out as a class to be plucked and squeezed for another's benefit and another's gain, until his fertile acres stand only for the debt he owes! Is not the tax his country puts on everything he buys worse than shackles on his limbs, requiring him to not only toil himself all the hours of the long day and to the verge of exhaustion, but must compel him to require his wife to keep even step with him, and his children with hardened hands and moist brows to follow closely after?

It must not be understood that the toil and



drudgery and persistent effort to escape the pangs of poverty, are universal on the farm. By no means. But there are enough of all these to cause alarm and insist on a remedy. The rising generation must see a prospect of the tax for protection abolished, or it is only a question of time when the farms will become great landed estates, owned by the few and rented to the present owners.

In order that the boy should be persuaded to remain on the farm, his work must be easier than his parents have experienced. He must become satisfied that the tendency of public sentiment favors the removal of so much of the tax as goes into the pockets of the owners of the protected industries, or otherwise farm life will be distasteful to him and lead the next generation to take up its abode in the cities as, to a great extent, the present one is doing. The farmer's son can not help seeing that so much of the tax as is levied for protection about equals the amount the farm runs behind each year, and he is not to blame for engaging in some other business, if this system of plucking is to continue. If the boys are expected to stay on the farm, their fathers must unite and secure the repeal of the obnoxious and unjust features of the tariff laws. If the nation would have a stalwart race of sturdy men to till the soil—men who own the land they cultivate and the homes in which they live—then must Congress remove a large share of the tax on the necessaries of life and on the implements of the farm. If the laws can not help the farmer in his efforts to feed the world, they should not put

obstacles in the way of his making a decent living for himself. The law must deal fairly and justly with him and not rob him to enrich his neighbor. With the competition the farmer must encounter, he is more in need of protection than the industries which are protected. He does not, however, plead for protection, he simply asks that he shall not be required to take the little profits which arise from the sale of farm products and hand them to the wealthy manufacturer. When law ceases to protect the manufacturer, it will cease to rob the farmer. When law ceases to rob the farmer, he will not only thrive and prosper, but he will do so without making slaves of his family, and when his family cease to be slaves, his sons and daughters as a rule will stay on the farm. Not all of them, and always, because there are railroads to build and operate, there are universities needing practical presidents and professors, there are ships to build and great mercantile interests to be looked after, and as the farm has furnished such men heretofore, it will keep on doing so hereafter, unless long-continued, unjust taxation shall result in laying waste the farm, and blot it out from the list of American industries.

At the age of fifteen, Mary Holbrook was sent to a young ladies' seminary in an Eastern town. She had been a diligent student in the country school, and found it an easy task to keep pace with her class in the seminary. From the grand old school of nature she had graduated with high honors, and the lessons learned in the groves and fields served her well with her new-found companions. She

quickly became a favorite with all. An interesting and fascinating conversationalist, always having at her command a fund of practical information, which she knew how to use to the best advantage, she drew around her a circle of admiring friends.

Mary Holbrook was now what the world would term a beautiful woman. Her manners were pleasing and, in fact, charming. She dressed with becoming taste, and though the only child of a wealthy father, she made no display of riches, but prided herself on being a farmer's daughter, fond of the farmer's life.

Henry Winters, having finished the usual branches taught in the public school, and having spent one year attending the high school at the county seat, entered the State Agricultural College for a three years' course. His experience there was not different from that of most students in his class. He was quick and keen and apt to learn, and he was ambitious to stand well to the front in all his recitations. He was devoted to politics, and took great interest in works and studies on political economy. As the tariff question was one of absorbing importance, he became a close observer of its effects on capital and labor, and particularly its bearing on the industries connected with the farm. He had imbibed many valuable ideas upon the subject from his mother, whose discussions he had often listened to with interest and profit; so that now, when he found himself face to face with learned professors, who had made the great question a life study, he had an excellent opportunity to compare his mother's practical knowl-

edge of the subject with the more learned views of the college tutors. He was gratified to know that he would not have to unlearn what he had been taught, because he found his teachings were in harmony with the sentiments of the best scholars and ablest writers in the land.



## CHAPTER V.

THE FARMER—HIS WIFE—HIS DAUGHTER—HIS SON.

Mrs. Winters constantly busied herself going about doing good. Where there were sufferers from any cause, in the neighborhood, she was found alleviating their troubles, pouring the oil of consolation into their wounds and ministering to their wants. The poor were never turned away empty from her door. The sick found in her an intelligent, willing and faithful nurse and friend. She comforted the dying with words of solace and hope, and from her lips they were consoled with the precious truths of the religion of Christ. Neither expecting nor desiring reward for her labors, she did what she could to make the world around her better for her living in it.

The neighbors came to her for counsel and advice. She consented to be the custodian of their savings, which they laid by to use on their shopping expeditions to town. Almost the whole neighborhood loved and respected her. Very many of the improvements in and about the farm houses were made at her suggestion, and numerous little things were done, now and then, here and there, at her own expense. Many things which seemed essential to the comfort and convenience of the women and children of the household were not done, because of the lack of means to do with. While there were many pleasing exceptions to the general rule, yet by far the greater num-

ber had to scrimp and manage and economize in every way possible to keep reasonably comfortable and not make an exhibition of their real needs. There was not a day in the year but it would come to Mrs. Winters' notice that it was the tariff operating in one way or another that was making the burdens of these good people so hard to bear. The earnings which should have been applied to improvements on the farm, to repairing the dwelling-house, outbuildings and fences, and to procuring winter clothing for wife and children, and laying in a supply of table necessaries, went into the pockets of the wealthy manufacturer. But the people were being educated. The subject was discussed at the sessions of their alliances and granges. They read all that came in their way. Anything having a bearing on the effect of the tariff on the farm was of the greatest interest to them. The question was discussed around the fireside and at the family meal. Mothers talked the matter over with their daughters and fathers hurried up the day's task to go over the topic with their sons.

One afternoon there came to the village a family of English people, attracted there by the pleasing scenery, the bracing, health-giving air and the beautiful lake. Listening one day to a group of men and women in earnest discussion of the tariff, the Englishman ventured to answer a question which he was familiar with.

"This business suit I have on," he remarked, "cost me in Liverpool thirteen dollars. Am I not right," turning to a merchant who was present, "when I say that you could not afford to sell such a suit for less than twenty dollars?"

“You are right,” said the merchant. “Such a suit would readily sell here for twenty dollars.”

The Englishman then directing his remarks to a farmer who had been asking questions with the view of being informed of the effect the tariff had on the price of clothing, said: “You see your questions are answered. If you buy a suit like this in your country you will pay forty per cent. more for it than you would if you bought it in my country. There is no high protective tariff in England. There is in America. If it is not your tariff which makes this difference, pray what is it?”

“When we were in New York” continued the Englishman, “my wife bought several articles of wearing apparel and she can tell you ladies how the prices compare with those in London.”

“I bought a bill of underwear,” said the English lady, “for which I paid eleven dollars, and I had the same kind of goods in my trunk that I bought in England that I paid only six dollars for. I priced many other things, and I found that dress goods cost fully forty per cent. more in New York than in London, and blankets, carpets and woolen goods generally were double the London price. I don’t know anything about why it is so, but I know the fact to be so.”

“Everybody who has anything to do with farm life,” broke in Mrs. Winters, “as well as the working people generally, are beginning to learn the reason of this difference in prices. We are all rapidly learning the fact that it is the unjust and unfair tariff that is responsible, a tariff which benefits

only those persons who are manufacturing those goods in this country. That tax we have to pay does not help labor to employment nor to pay. It is simply protection to capital, and it not only does not benefit labor, but persistently robs the farmer of a large share of the net earnings of the farm."

"For one I am not only tired and sick of this tax," said the farmer's daughter, "but I am completely discouraged and disgusted at the way it uses us girls; and I don't see even a faint glimmer of light or hope of better things for the people on the farm, except through the success of tariff reform which is now so much discussed. I used to be tired and sick of the tariff question, and I thought it was none of my business—that it was something young ladies ought not to meddle with, and that it was a difficult question to understand. I have gotten bravely over that notion. There is no subject that has so much music in it, to my ears, as tariff reform. I find I am directly interested in the success of the reform. It stands between me and a score of comforts and pleasures, which by right I am entitled to, but which it deprives me of. I know that to be true; and I tell you now I am for the reform. I want better clothes and more of them, and I know I can't have them and the high tariff, too. The tariff has had its turn long enough. It has made me wear a calico dress two seasons, in order that I might contribute the price of one dress to protection. I have lived on the most common fare, because the money, that ought to have been spent for more palatable food, must be paid to some person who was engaged in a business



that wasn't profitable, and the tariff compelled me to donate to him the greater part of my savings, so as to make it profitable. What nonsense! That is, it would be nonsense, if it wasn't so cruel. But I have had enough of it. Last fall I sang high protective songs. I shall sing no more of that kind. I am getting my eyes open, and I believe the farmers are doing the same thing, and that they are going to bring about tariff reform, and, though only a farmer's daughter, I propose to help them do it. Boys, do you understand what that means? I am not the only girl in this neighborhood that talks this way, either. We are all determined to do what we can to prevent our share of the earnings of the farm being handed over to some manufacturer, who thinks he can't do business without everybody, who buys the kind of goods he makes, donating him something. I notice that nobody gives the farmer anything. If his business don't pay, he must not only grin and bear it, but more than likely he will have to put a mortgage on the farm to obtain money to make his contribution to the thing called Protection. The farmer that will hurrah for his party if that party is not outspoken for tariff reform, has not yet been ground down into the dust deep enough, and his wife and children have not yet worked the ends of their fingers clean off. But before he takes the step which shall help to lengthen the life of the present tariff another span, let him talk the matter over with his wife and daughters and sons, and see what they think about it. Thank heaven, my father has come to his senses, and so have my brothers."

“Just my notion of it, too. I used to think the dryest subject a person could discuss was tariff and tariff reform,” observed the farmer’s wife. “When Mrs. Winters first commenced talking about it, I thought it was a queer thing for a woman to do. But when she explained so clearly how the tariff was keeping our noses on the grindstone by making us pay from one-third to one-half more for everything we bought, and that our hard earnings, instead of being used to make the family comfortable were forced from us and given to people who were already rich, and they gave us nothing in return, I began to get mad. For a while I was reconciled to it because they said the tariff was for the protection of labor, and that it gave the farmer a home market for what he had to sell, and that he couldn’t sell his surplus unless labor was protected. I have examined these reasons for a high tariff and I am convinced they do not amount to a hill of beans. It is protection for capital and not for labor. Only those who can get along without it are benefited, while the farmers and laboring men, the operatives in the mills and the mines are taxed to death to make those rich people richer. The fact is I don’t know of a more fascinating subject for even women to discuss than this tariff reform. The only earthly hope the farmer as a class now has to get out of debt, clear the farm of its mortgage, clothe the family comfortably and make home cheerful and its inmates contented, is to bring about tariff reform. I can not vote, but my sons can, and they have a good deal of confidence in their mother’s judgment in such matters. I am glad to

see the men aroused and outspoken in favor of this reform, and I feel that a concert of action which will unite the farm influence will insure its success."

"That is the right kind of talk, wife," said Farmer Johnson, proudly, "and I guess the whole neighborhood and the farmers generally are of the same opinion, and I know they are waking up to the necessity of making tariff reform the leading issues in the elections. For a long time I didn't care whether the tariff was high or low, I didn't see how it effected me one way or the other. I have gotten my eyes open, and if I don't do my part toward lowering the taxes, then I will have no right to grumble at hard times or lament being in debt, and I will have no right to enter a protest against my earnings being taken out of my pockets and donated by the government to the rich nabob on the hill. If I am willing they should have my money, I ought not to complain if they take it."

Then came the son's turn to say something, and, if possible, he was more pronounced in opposition to high tariff than either the others who had spoken. The thing had been in his way all his life long, and he was tired of it. As a lad and as a grown-up boy he had worked on the farm diligently and faithfully. He didn't know what laziness or idleness was. He had lately been looking into this tariff question, and he was satisfied that unless there was a radical change in the unfair manner of levying taxes on the farmer, there were no better times in store for him, and he would go to town and try some other avocation. He had studied both sides of the question. He had listened

to several practical discussions of the subject by able men on both sides. He must confess he had been charmed with the theory of the protectionists, whose pictures of high wages, home markets and home comforts, had, for a time, made him a friend of the high tariff. But the more he reflected and the more he listened to the plain, practical talk of Major Holbrook, Mrs. Winters and others, the better he became satisfied he was influenced by love of the party his father had been so many years identified with, rather than by his own convictions. He had been talking the matter over with his father, and they were both convinced that the only hope for the farmer, as a class, was the success of tariff reform. He believed in it, and he was as ready to shout for party as ever before, but the party he shouted for must have emblazoned on its banner, "Tariff Reform."

That evening Mrs. Winters went home, pleased beyond measure at the evidences of the growing sentiment in the neighborhood upon the question of tariff reduction. She believed she had been an humble instrument in the hands of Providence in interesting the wives, sons and daughters of the farmers in a subject that at first glance had nothing to charm or fascinate women or young people.

The veil had been lifted. Beneath it was a flood of loveliness. The seed had been planted in rich ground. It bade fair to yield a grand harvest of mortgages satisfied, debts paid, profitable crops marketed, labor liberally rewarded, cheerful homes, happy wives and contented children. Not the millennium, but equal and exact justice to all men.



## CHAPTER VI.

### LOVERS' TALK.

Henry and Mary spent their first summer vacation at their homes near the country village. They were both of that age when love of romance overshadows all else in life. The practical and the real will come soon enough, but they do not obtrude themselves on young hearts when all the surroundings are bright and joyous. These young people lived in dreams and in castles in the air, and they hoped that if the realities of life were to run counter to their dreams, and their airy castles, they might never awake. Not a ripple broke the harmony of their young lives and not a zephyr ruffled the smoothness of their young loves.

Much of the time was given to sailing on the little lake. They called it sailing, but their homely craft had neither sail nor mast on which to fix a sail, or place to put a rudder. It was a frail thing, which at odd times Henry had managed to put together, something after the nature of a raft, with a rough box-like structure built much as children build play houses. This served for protection from sun and wind and rain, and as it was the only craft that floated on those waters, it had the right to go anywhere and everywhere, and no one cared to object or protest against it. In order to direct the course of the craft and control it, a skulling oar was fitted in

the end of what might be termed the prow, and thus easily and readily was Henry able to manage the little float.

So, drifting and floating in whichever direction the winds blew, they had naught to do except to tell the story of their love, and over and over again they told it, and it neither grew monotonous nor did they grow weary in telling it. Leisurely and unconcernedly they drifted on, floating gently and quietly, with now and then a slight breath of wind from the bluffs to break the smoothness of the placid waters, and they wished they could float all the years away, and at will land on a shore where love reigned supreme and always.

“Harry, if you love me, tell me so.”

“Did you say ‘if,’ Mary? In the vocabulary of love there is and can be no ‘if.’ The little word has never yet come betwixt your love and mine. It must not now. ‘If’ chases love away. ‘Ifs’ flourish where there is the least love. They drive the schoolboy to despair, and make him hate his books, his teacher and himself, and yet ‘ifs’ are the rounds in the ladder of fame which enable the student to climb to the top. In that blissful realm where love is the queen, there can be no ‘ifs,’ because love would die were an ‘if’ admitted there. There never yet was heart large enough for love and an ‘if’ to dwell together. I know there is not an ‘if’ in any part of my being when love for you is my theme.”

“There now, Harry, I like to hear you talk that way. That is music to my ears. It is real poetry—the poetry born of love. But why don’t you keep on telling me you love me?”

“Why, Mary, only yesterday I told you a hundred times I love you.”

“True, true, I remember now you did, and to-day I want you to tell me so a thousand times. I live only in your love, and that withdrawn for a day, or lessened by so much as the breath of air which stirs so lightly yonder purple leaf, and I care not to live. Tell me you love me. Tell me not in words. They deceive. Tell me with your eyes. Tell me with your cheeks glowing with the flame that comes from swift-flowing blood through veins that ought to know no other duty save to bear the messages of love from your heart to mine, tell me through silent lips of the height, the depth and the duration of your love, put the story into big volumes, and be ages telling it, that I may know I am truly loved.”

“Mary, since early childhood I have told you the story of my love, and it has been the story of my life. As life grows apace, my story grows, too, and whether I tell it with eyes or lips, with heart or soul, it shall be the love you ask of me. If it shall take me ages to tell it, then let me live those ages in your love, and the story tells itself. To live and to love are one. May heaven never unloose the cord that binds our hearts together.”

Thus these lovers talked. The great big world and all therein was nothing to them. Love was everything.

Did heaven hear that prayer?

The summer vacation ended, Henry resumed his studies at the college. His class would graduate in the spring. The fall months pass rapidly, and win-

ter finds him busily engaged in preparing the paper he is to read at commencement. The professors expect much of him. He has been a diligent and tireless student, and his heart is in his work. His theme is one of great interest throughout the land, and particularly to the farmers. Brought up on a farm himself, and at home and in the college a close student of the effect the tariff has upon agriculture, he approaches his subject of "Tariff Reform not Free Trade" with his whole soul full of well-matured thoughts.

Henry was favored with an intelligent audience, mostly farmers. He commenced by telling his hearers that "tariff for protection was a crime which differed from highway robbery only in the fact that the tariff was legal robbery, while robbery by the highwayman was illegal." This introductory sentence, so complete, so unqualified and so far-reaching in its application, spoken so earnestly and eloquently, at once drew to the speaker the undivided attention of the entire audience. When he added that "the farmer, as a class, was robbed deliberately, systematically and ceaselessly, to make another man's business profitable, and that this was done without a murmur or complaint on the part of the farmer, and was really done by his permission and consent, and was submitted to because a former generation had favored it for the laudable purpose of raising money to carry on the War of the Rebellion," those horny-handed, bronzed-face farmers looked at each other as though they were realizing the force and meaning of a great truth which they had often heard, but never before had it been so vividly impressed upon them.



“The farmer,” the speaker continued, “was constantly being deceived by the cry that a reduction of the tariff meant free trade and free trade meant a direct tax on all the property the farmer possessed, so that there would be added to his local and State taxes a Federal tax far greater than all his other taxes. This cry was simply a scare. No one proposed free trade.

After taxing luxuries all they would admit of, if desirable to also tax necessities, the farmer would not object. The government obtains its revenue for current expenses from a tax on tobacco, alcohol and a duty or tax on the articles brought here from foreign countries. The tax on those foreign articles is intended to be so adjusted as to realize whatever amount the government requires in addition to the amount derived from the tax on tobacco and alcohol. As this amount is several hundred millions of dollars, the manufacturer may enjoy a certain degree of protection, but it should come to him not as the object of the tariff, but as the consequence of a tariff for revenue. This large amount required by the government must always be an unsurmountable obstacle to the establishment of free trade. In the adjustment of the tariff for revenue, however, the burthens should be borne equally on all interests and all industries and not as now, piled almost wholly upon the shoulders of the farmers and the day laborers. In fighting shy of the myth of free trade, be careful you do not bankrupt yourselves on the rocks of Protection.

After the expenses of the government are pro-

vided for, any additional sum derived from the tariff creates a surplus which ought to be left in the pockets of the people rather than put in the vaults of the treasury. But the tariff by no means stops with surplus. Then comes Protection, which is simply forcing one man to donate something to another man who claims he could not carry on his business without such contributions. The speaker had noticed, however, that the recipients of those donations grew richer each year, while the men and women who did the work were forced to be content with wages which, after deducting living expenses, left little or nothing for a rainy day.

“Tariff reform is the panacea for this gigantic wrong. Tariff reform comes straight home to the pockets of every farmer in the land, reducing his family expenses, increasing the purchasing power of his surplus produce, so that, instead of farming at a loss and running behind each year, he will be enabled to get out of debt, supply his family with the necessities and comforts of life, and lay by a competence for his old age.

“It is not free trade that will do this. It is fair, just and equitable trade that will do it. This fair trade will come when the farmers are ready to demand it. No greater truth was ever dinned into the farmers' ears than the declaration that the farmers themselves are to blame for the unprofitable condition of farming. Nor can you farmers of the great West, farmers of the East and farmers of the South retrieve your losses and restore your lands to the old-time value and profitableness, without a concert

of action and union of votes. The lands don't need fertilizers, they are rich enough. It is the farmers that need nerve and pluck and courage to break away from an organization, political or otherwise, that refuses to declare its detestation of a tariff for protection.

“Don't be deceived by the hue and cry of free trade. It is not free trade to so reduce the tax on woolen goods and raw wool that a farmer can buy a coat for fifteen dollars, for which he now pays twenty-five dollars, and still allow twenty-five per cent. for the manufacturer's protection. Free trade would give him that coat for ten dollars!

“Farmers, if you pay six hundred dollars a year for food and clothing for your family, one hundred and fifty dollars of that sum is tax—unadulterated, cold, brutal tax, of which amount it may be that twenty dollars goes to the government, the balance is Protection—pure and simple. If you vote with a party that proposes to reduce that tax one-half and that party gets into power and makes that reduction, you are benefited to the extent, at least, of one-half of that tax, and free trade is still so far distant that unless you want to be scared you will not even experience the sensation of a quickened pulse.

“Tariff reform proposes to blot out so much of this tax as is set apart for protection. When blotted out, new life and vigor will be given to every industry in the land, furnishing employment to the idle million and insuring a market, home and abroad, for all the products of American industries and all the surplus products of American farms.”

There was more of this essay than a mere roll of manuscript tied with blue ribbon. There was food in it for sober reflection. There were truths in it which came home to every farmer who heard them, and they bore good fruit and an abundant harvest.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MORTGAGE ON THE FARM AND HOW IT GOT THERE.

One afternoon in July, Farmer Nagle was taking his noon rest, feeding his pigs, when Major Holbrook came along, and after passing the time of day, they sat down in the shade of the barn, and resumed a conversation at a point where they had been interrupted a few days before.

“ You say, Neighbor Nagle, that the mortgage on your farm is eight hundred dollars, drawing eight per cent. interest ? ”

“ Yes sir. ”

“ How long has the mortgage been running ? ”

“ I will tell you. Ten years ago I found I was behind at the store, and I knew Mr. Sample could not carry me any longer, so I put a mortgage of three hundred dollars on the farm and paid all my debts. My crops were good each year, but what I had to sell brought way-down prices, so three years afterward I found I was not paying expenses, and I increased the amount of the mortgage to five hundred dollars. The next year I had to buy a reaping machine, a corn cultivator and a wagon, for which I went in debt. The price of farm produce kept low. The price of necessities which I could not get along without, kept up. I could not bring things together and make them come out even, and I was compelled, two years after-

wards, to increase the mortgage to eight hundred dollars."

"You have kept the interest paid, I suppose."

"I did up to the last year, though at times it has been a mighty tight pull to do it. I had to save in every way possible, and so did my wife and children, and so we all do now, but I am ashamed to confess it, the past year's interest has not been paid—and between you and me, Major, I don't know where I am to get the money to pay with."

"Are you being pushed for the interest?"

"Yes, you know those Eastern money loaners are very particular about the interest. They must have the interest to loan to some other needy farmer."

"But, Neighbor Nagle, how are you going to get out of your trouble? If you can't pay the interest you certainly can't pay any portion of the principle. It looks to me you are very much like a man in the mire—if you stand still you sink deeper and if you try to extricate yourself down you go."

"That is just the way I feel about it. Had I been making mistakes or bad debts, or if I was lazy and indolent and wouldn't work, or was a spendthrift, or if I had an extravagant family, or if things about the farm went wrong and I was to blame, then I might turn over a new leaf, correct my mistakes and make a struggle to get out of debt. But I don't know how I can change my management of the farm for the better. My land is well tilled. I raise big crops. I have considerable surplus every year to sell. I buy only such things as the family must have and can not get along without—and really I do not see wherein I

can do differently from what I have done and am doing. What encouragement, then, have I to push ahead and wear my life out and have my family do so too, when our reward will simply be a greater debt, and the certainty of the mortgage being foreclosed and my home taken from me?"

"Your case, Farmer Nagle, is a common one, but none the less painful for that. I know of a large number of farmers in this neighborhood with just such mortgages hanging over their heads. No doubt they feel as you do—discouraged, discontented and disheartened. But let me tell you, neighbor, that while the outlook is dark and gloomy, the outcome may not be as bad as you picture, if you and the farmers generally have the courage to apply the remedy they have at hand."

"Courage! Why, Major, I have the courage to face a tiger in the jungle or a band of robbers on the prairie, or any other danger, if I thought a victory would help me get out of debt and keep my farm. What do you mean by courage?"

"I mean, my friend, that you must dare to do just what you have expressed a willingness to do. Robbers have been stealing your substance for years. They have come upon your premises when you were awake and when you were asleep. They have robbed you in a hundred different ways and they have robbed every member of your family. They have taken from you your hard earnings and turned round and loaned you the very earnings they forced from you; and that there should be no risk of their not getting their pay they have required you to give them a mortgage on

your farm. You have not only never raised a hand to resist the robbery, but you have permitted it and consented to it, and now beckon the robbers to come on and finish their work by taking your farm."

"You mean, I suppose, it is the tariff which has brought upon me this debt and this mortgage. Pray tell me how you connect my misfortunes with the operation of the tariff?"

"That is just what I want to do, I want to convince you of that fact, and I think I can make it so plain you will admit it. I have a few questions to ask you, and I know you will cheerfully answer them. How much of a family have you?"

"My wife and five children—three boys and two girls."

"How much money do you pay for things that you do not raise on the farm?"

"I can answer that question quite correctly, because I kept a book account of my expenses. I find I spent last year six hundred and thirty dollars."

"Will you allow me to look at the items?"

"Oh, yes."

"While you are helping the boys hitch up and starting them into the corn field, I will look over these items and figure the amount of tax you pay on the gross sum."

The Major looked over the list carefully. The expense account was a fair average of like families. Upon Mr. Nagle's return the figures were shown him and he saw the tax he had paid in the way of tariff was one hundred and fifty-seven dollars—an average of twenty-five per cent.



“This tax,” replied Mr. Nagle, “is levied in a way that will make my share of the expenses of running the government fall as lightly on me as possible, is it not?”

“That can not be, because only a small part of it goes to the government, at the outside not more than ten per cent.”

“And what do you say is done with the balance?”

“It goes into the pockets of the rich manufacturers. It is not your contribution to the government, it is your contribution to protection. You pay it because it is the law, and not one cent of benefit comes to you in any way, shape or manner.”

“Does not the same tariff protect my surplus crops?”

“Pray, Neighbor Nagle, tell me what crop you raise that England, or Germany, or France, or any foreign country sends here and sells and competes with you. Protection, you know, is to prevent foreign competition. Do those countries, or either of them, send wheat or flour or pork here and fix the market price of such produce?”

“No, by no means.”

“Then can a tariff of twenty cents per bushel on wheat, twenty per cent. on flour, ten cents per bushel on corn, oats and barley, and one cent per pound on pork and beef, be any protection to the farmer?”

“For the life of me, now that you call my attention to it, I do not see how it can. Nor can I see any earthly object in putting such a tariff on farm produce. Do you know why it has been done?”

“I think it has been done on purpose to reconcile

us farmers to being robbed every day of our lives by the tariff that is fixed on everything we buy. It is done to deceive and cheat us. We are led to believe by solemn law that our farm produce is protected, and that it is necessary for us to have such protection in order to sell our produce at a profit, when, if we were protected, one dollar on a bushel of corn, we could not sell it for one cent a bushel more, for the simple reason we have no foreign competition in our home market, and the price of *our* produce is fixed in a foreign market."

"But, Major, is not this protective tariff on the products of the manufacturers necessary to enable the manufacturer to pay living wages to his operatives? And are not we farmers thus enabled to sell our surplus produce to those operatives? In a word, does not a protective tariff make a home market for farm produce?"

"No. It really circumscribes and reduces the scope of that market, because that very tariff makes it impossible to employ as much labor as might be done were the restrictions the tariff puts on trade removed wholly or even in part. Then the price we receive for our produce at home is fixed in Liverpool or London, and we must compete with all foreign countries that grow farm produce, no matter by how cheap labor, and no matter where they sell it. This would not be so bad if we could go into those countries that compete with us and buy our clothing and other family supplies without paying a protective tariff on them. This we can't do."

“Now right here, Major, I wish you would tell me how fixing the price of our produce in London, and prohibiting or restricting our buying goods in that city, really does affect the farmer.”

“I think I can make that clear to you, and I am glad you have suggested it. How much wheat do you expect to market this season?”

“About five hundred bushels.”

“You haul your wheat to Bradford Junction, I presume?”

“I do.”

“What price will you get, and what do you propose to do with the proceeds?”

“Sixty cents per bushel, and I have determined to use this year’s crop to purchase articles of clothing which my family has been in need of, more or less, for two or three years.”

“Now, Mr. Nagle, instead of selling your wheat at Bradford Junction, imagine that you take it to London. Perhaps the price there is \$1.20 per bushel. If so, you will find that the charges, transportation, elevator, middlemen, etc., are sixty cents per bushel. So you realize the same sum for your wheat in London that you would at Bradford. You propose, instead of taking the \$300 home with you, to make your purchases in London. You buy the following bill of goods:

80 yards carpet at 40 cents per yard.....	\$ 32 00
3 woolen shawls at \$6 each.....	18 00
500 pounds granulated sugar at 3½c.....	17 50
Drugs and spices.....	9 50
Hardware, cutlery and glassware.....	6 00
6 pair woolen blankets at \$1.50 per pair.....	9 00
4 overcoats, cassimere.....	30 00
4 suits of clothes at \$8 per suit.....	32 00
Woolen underwear for male and female.....	25 00
Table linen and toweling.....	15 00
60 yards dress goods, worsted.....	35 00
Gloves, handkerchiefs and hosiery.....	20 00
Cotton cloth for bedding and clothing.....	8 00
Books and writing material.....	5 00
Hats, caps, trimmings, ties and buttons.....	18 00
Freight to Bradford Junction.....	20 00
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$300 00</b>

Upon reaching home you take the bill of items to a Bradford merchant, and ask him what he can duplicate it for. His figures will not vary much from the following:

80 yards carpet at 80c.....	\$ 64 00
3 woolen shawls.....	30 00
500 pounds granulated sugar at 6c.....	30 00
Drugs and spices.....	13 50
Hardware, cutlery and glassware.....	10 00
6 pairs woolen blankets at \$2.50.....	15 00
4 overcoats.....	49 50
4 suits of clothes.....	52 80
Woolen underwear.....	41 25
Table linen and toweling.....	21 75
60 yards dress goods, worsted.....	49 00
Gloves, handkerchiefs and hosiery.....	29 00
Cotton cloth for bedding or clothing.....	11 12
Hats, Caps and trimmings.....	23 40
Books and stationery.....	6 25
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>\$446 57</b>



There you have it in a nutshell. Your \$300 derived from the sale of 500 bushels of wheat will buy in London what you have to pay \$446.57 for at Bradford Junction. A difference of \$146.57 in favor of the prices you paid in London, but not in your favor, for when the railroad delivers your goods it will present you a bill for back charges amounting to \$146.57, which charges are the custom house tax you must pay and which brings the cost of your goods the same as though you had purchased them at Bradford Junction. Which fact also disproves the theory that the tax on foreign goods is paid by the manufacturer. Now, no matter how much or how little of this \$146.57 goes into the Federal Treasury, the entire amount is levied for the purpose of protecting, directly or indirectly, those American industries engaged in manufacturing the kind of goods you bought. It is, in fact, your contribution to protection. You sell your wheat where everybody who cultivates the soil is your competitor, and you buy your necessaries where there is no competition. You sell your wheat in the cheapest market in the world and you buy your family supplies in the dearest.

If protection was not the American system, your wheat would be worth, at Bradford Junction, 89½ cents per bushel, instead of 60 cts.—that is, that would be its purchasing power, and you know of no other value your wheat, or corn, or pork, or cattle possesses, except what they would buy for the use and comfort of your family. Admit the tariff has nothing to do with fixing the market price of your produce, it certainly

has enough to do with fixing the price of things you buy with the proceeds of the farm, to put an eight-hundred-dollar mortgage on your home and keep you and your family busy denying themselves the necessaries of life in order that the manufacturer, who lives in that magnificent palace on the hill, may build a similar structure at some fashionable watering place."

"I admit, Major, you have made some mighty strong points against the present tariff, and I must confess, I see in a clear light a branch of this subject which I have always found difficulty in understanding. Looking at the tariff disconnected from everything else, it looks as though it was designed to rob us farmers of our earnings and finally of our homes. But the entire subject of producing and consuming must be treated as a whole, and, so treating it, I ask again: Does not the tariff enable manufacturers to compete with the cheap labor of foreign countries, and pay such wages to operatives as will enable them to buy our produce?"

"No. It really works just the other way, as I can easily satisfy you. The tariff so limits, retards and restricts the business of manufacturers that the operatives are not only paid less wages, but quite a proportion of them work only a part of the time, and a vast army of willing hands are idle because there is no work for them to do. What the farmer wants is to have the greatest possible number of laborers constantly employed and well paid. It is the growing reduction of wages that prevents labor from being liberal patrons of the farm. The number of idle men

appear to be on the increase, and certainly wages are no higher now than ten years ago. High tariff is the link in the chain of industry connecting low wages for labor with low prices for farm produce. So far as it does that it weakens the whole chain, has no business there, and ought to be removed. We all know the interests of the farmer and labor are identical. They must stand shoulder to shoulder, and move hand in hand. If an average of three operatives could be added to each work-shop in the land, employment would be given to every person who wanted work. If the people outside the farm were made so prosperous that they could increase their annual purchases of breadstuffs and meat, an average of barely five dollars each, the farmer would have a home market, in addition to what he now has, for more produce than this country ever sold in one year to all foreign lands. The market for the products of this increased labor must be found abroad. It can be found by abolishing the tax on raw material and inaugurating a general interchange of commodities with all the world."

"Such a statement, Major, really startles me. Can it be true? If so, the need is not so much more mouths to consume farm produce, and the building up of a bigger home market as far as numbers are concerned, as the steady employment of all who desire to work with fair wages, thus enabling the masses to live better and more comfortably by buying more food and raiment. The farmer, you think, is more interested and has more at stake in labor prospering than has any other class of people."

“Just so, every word of it. There can be no serious disturbance in finance but the farmer is injured by it. Every strike or lock-out reduces the demand for farm produce. Every failure of any industry, or a partial suspension of work which throws operatives out of employment, reduces the demand for farm produce. The lowering of wages reduces the demand for farm produce. The idle million of strong and willing hands reduces the demand for farm produce. Anything which tends to depress business and hinder the prosperity of the country reduces the demand for farm produce. The farmer must have thrift and prosperity all around him, everywhere, in the work-shop, factory, mine and counting-room, in order to thrive and prosper himself. Any other class of producers except the farmer can limit and control the extent of its products in accordance with the demand and the ability of consumers to buy.”

“Do you assert, Major Holbrook, that the thrift and prosperity so desirable would be assured the farmer by the success of tariff reform?”

“I do not assert that it will prove the great cure-all for every disease which effects the body politic. I do insist, however, that the chief cause of the depression in agriculture is the protective tariff. Remove the cause of the depression and the depression can not continue.”

“Will you explain more fully,” asked Farmer Nagle, “how the work-shops of this country, which I have read number nearly one-third of a million, could find a market for their products were they to



and what would be equal to three operatives to the working force of each?"

"I believe that with raw material," replied Major Holbrook, "such as iron and copper ore, sugar, lumber, wool and coal, admitted free, and half the tariff on necessaries removed, this country could make and sell enough goods to the people of Great Britain, Central and South America and Mexico, to employ, in the making of them, every idle man in the United States, and pay them good living wages. This trade of itself would make a better and bigger home market for farm produce, in addition to what we now possess, than could be secured from all the skilled industries in the land if engaged in manufacturing goods only for the home market."

"I can not help admitting," added Farmer Nagle, "that there is a good deal of sound reasoning in such statements. I have no desire to contradict them. On the contrary, I am inclined to believe them. But please tell me how the tariff stands in the way of our now building up such a trade with those countries?"

"I see there is an idle team in the corn-field waiting for you, Mr. Nagle, and I will not detain you longer," said the Major, "when you can find a little leisure, come round to my house and we will take up this subject with that question."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HOW TO GET RID OF THE MORTGAGE ON THE FARM.

“Well, Farmer Nagle, I hardly expected to see you this evening, and yet I am glad you have come. Take a seat.”

“Thank you, Major, I have come because I am beginning to think this tariff has everything to do with successful farming, and I propose to find out how it does it.”

“You have hit the nail square on the head, Farmer Nagle. The tariff does prevent successful farming, and I will tell you how. But first let me answer the question you asked me to-day noon. ‘How does the tariff prevent the United States building up a large trade with foreign countries?’ In the first place, if the fetters put on the manufactures of this country and the Chinese-wall policy pursued by this government toward other nations were removed, we would not only drive England and France, to a certain extent, out of the markets of Central and South America and Mexico, but we would sell goods wherever on the face of the earth goods were bought.”

“I wish you would explain, Major, what you mean by removing the ‘fetters’”

“I mean, to take the tariff off of every kind of raw material which enters largely into the product of any American industry, and thus enable that indus-

try to manufacture better goods cheaper than they can be manufactured anywhere else on the round globe. Reduce the tax on necessaries at least one-half, and encourage the building of American ships by abolishing the tariff on everything that enters into the construction of a vessel. Load American ships with the products of American farms and American factories, and sail those ships into every harbor where there is a civilized community with money or raw material or other valuable commodities to exchange for our products. Make it an object for the world to buy American-made goods and the products of American soil, by buying from the world the things the world has to sell and the things America wants. Tear down all the barriers that fetter and handicap trade and traffic, and build up a commerce between America and the balance of the world which shall put this land in business communication with every community that wants to buy anything or wants to sell anything. There is no danger of the world getting the better of America. With trade unrestricted to the extent suggested, America can, if it becomes a strife between nations, both feed and clothe the world. That most dismal of all cries that ever pierced an American ear, and especially the ear of the farmer, and that most senseless cry, the cry of overproduction, would find no place in business circles, but the wares that America made and the surplus product the American farmer grew, would find a market, at a fair profit, either in America or beyond the sea. Then, with gambling in farm produce stopped, Chicago and New York, might

have something to say about fixing the price. There would be no excuse for hostile foreign tariffs which work such serious injury to the American farmer. Those countries which exclude our pork products and tax our breadstuffs would fall in with this liberal policy, and again invite us to feed their people."

"Would not this country then," replied Farmer Nagle, "to all intents and purposes have free trade?"

"No, my dear sir, it would not be free trade, but it would be fair, just and honorable trade, in which the United States has nothing to lose but everything to gain. There would still be sufficient tax on foreign goods, added to the internal revenue, to meet the expenses of the government and give to home industries enough protection to not only make those industries profitable, but to insure to labor good wages and steady employment."

"If this country," continued Major Holbrook, "expects to sell its products to other nations, it must buy goods which other nations sell. This is fair trade. If you take your produce to Bradford Junction and get the money for it of a merchant who runs a store and sells goods as cheap as any one else and you take that money and go to Wilton Station and buy your family supplies, that is unfair trade. Persisted in for a considerable length of time the Bradford merchant would refuse to buy your wheat and pork, because his profit in a deal with you comes from the goods he sells you at here than from the produce he buys of you. So with our breadstuff and meat sold in England or South America or any other foreign country. If the shipper persists in demand-



ing gold and silver, and refuses to take in exchange for that produce such articles as those countries grow or mine or manufacture and such as we need and can buy cheaper than at home, we can not expect those countries to buy our products."

"Have you in your mind, Major, any article of raw material brought from abroad, admitted free, which our factories use to advantage?"

"Yes, there is raw silk. While many other industries, particularly woolen mills, are languishing, the silk mills are prospering and the operatives are paid high wages. A few years ago raw hides were put on the free list, since which time we have increased our sales of boots and shoes to foreign countries from less than half a million dollars annually to more than ten million dollars, and we bring those hides in large quantities from foreign countries and send back millions of pounds of sole leather, employing, in tanning, thousands of hands. Before hides were put on the free list, this country sold no leather to any foreign country."

"Is there not a tariff on boots and shoes?"

"Yes, and it operates precisely as the tariff on wheat, flour and pork does. Except a few fancy articles purchased by those nabobs you have made so rich by pouring your earnings into their pockets, there are comparatively few boots and shoes imported."

"Are you clear in your mind, Major, that with European countries manufacturing such immense quantities of goods, the United States, even with free, raw material, and the tariff largely reduced on necessities, could compete with them?"

“There can be no doubt of it,” said Major Holbrook. “Though hampered and fettered by an ill-begotten and ill-fitting tariff, we have already gone into the midst of that competition and sold our wares. This country sold to England alone, in one year, more than twenty-five million dollars’ worth of manufactured goods, not counting flour or soil products. We bring raw sugar from abroad, and sell six or seven million dollars’ worth of refined sugar in the English market. We sell iron and steel machinery to England, and also clocks, watches, organs, pianos and other musical instruments. Make raw material free, and this country would surprise itself at the extent of the trade it would speedily build up in foreign markets.”

“I see, Neighbor Holbrook, the force of your reasoning, and I must say I feel like assenting to many of your conclusions. I like the idea of fair trade, and there is something massive in the thought that it is possible for this country to do the lion’s share of feeding and clothing mankind. I can but admit that the present policy is a supremely selfish one, and this country must be the loser all the time by continuing it. I confess it looks plausible that abolishing the tax on raw materials, and reducing the tariff largely on such other articles grown or prepared abroad as are essential for our manufacturers to use, to put them on an equal footing with the industries of other countries, and with the American brain behind the machinery and in the counting room, will enable America to make as cheap and as good goods as can be made elsewhere; and then

with free ships and unrestricted commerce, with the same industrious soliciting of trade and the same liberal methods of credit and interest practiced by England and France, I see no reason why those goods can not be sold wherever a civilized flag floats."

"Bravo, bravo, Mr. Nagle. You are becoming as enthusiastic upon this subject as I am. I like the way you grasp the situation. You don't seem to be afraid to admit that you know more to-day than you did yesterday. Great reforms must have defenders pulling in front and pushing behind, and to be a reformer, one must forget something that is old and learn something that is new. You have done it, and I welcome you, with outstretched arms, into the growing ranks of the advocates of tariff reform."

"Thank you, Major, for the compliment."

"Now, Neighbor Nagle, with this reform a possible success, what effect do you think it would have on the price of farm produce?"

"I believe it would, directly or indirectly, raise prices so there would once again be a satisfactory profit in growing grain and meat. It would give employment to the idle million and insure good wages to labor. It would give the farmer all there possibly can be in a home market, and all he could expect from a foreign market. It would reduce the price of the necessaries he must have for family use, and it would take the farm out of the rut that is each year being worn deeper and deeper, and give to the farmer a new lease of a new life, and to his family that peace, happiness and contentment they have been so largely deprived of the past two decades."

“I am pleased my friend to hear you talk thus. We will now come back to that mortgage which is eating up your substance and which threatens to turn you and your family out of doors.”

“True, true, in my exuberance of joy over the prospects of good times, which might come by the bringing about a reform in the tariff, I forgot I was in the mire and beyond help from any such reform. I see no hope or help for me or mine.”

“I am not so sure of that,” replied Major Holbrook, “as I have said it depends upon your own courage, whether you sink or come up on dry land. I have not, however, done with that mortgage. How much is your farm worth?”

“Ten years ago it was worth four thousand dollars, but it would not sell now for much more than half that sum.”

“What has caused this great reduction in its value?”

“That is a difficult question to answer. I really can not tell. The farm yielded this very year the biggest crops I ever had, so the cause can not be in the soil wearing out.”

“Has not the earning power of the farm had nearly everything to do with it?” asked the Major. “That is, if the farm had returned to you and your family a good living, and you had not been compelled to mortgage it to obtain money which it ought to have earned for you, would its value now not be fully what it was ten years ago?”

“I have no doubt of it.”

“Do you know, Mr. Nagle, that the profits from



farming are less than from any other business? The gain on capital invested in farms is two per cent., the gain on mortgages is eight per cent., and the gain on manufactories, which are protected by your earnings, is forty per cent. The very condition of things which makes farm property return only two per cent. to the owner makes manufactories return forty per cent. to their owners. See how it operates in your own case. The tax which has been levied on you in the name of tariff has each year been about one hundred and fifty-seven dollars. Of this amount, say fifteen dollars and seventy cents goes into the Federal treasury, as your share of the expense of running the government. The balance of one hundred and forty-one dollars and thirty cents goes into the pockets of manufacturers, for their protection, which fancied protection really hampers and handicaps them, and prevents any efforts on their part to compete with the manufactories of other countries."

"Strange I have not seen all this before, Major!"

"Now, then, with the tariff reform established as the policy of this country, you would have that one hundred and forty-one dollars and thirty cents to pay each year on your mortgage, instead of paying it for protection that does not protect."

"I see. I see. How the scales are dropping from my eyes!"

"And I trust, Farmer Nagle, you also see that the amount you have every year donated to wealthy manufacturers is just about the amount you have been running behind each year."

"Yes, I see that, too."

“Now then, with this amount saved every year, to apply on the mortgage, and the price of your produce increased to the extent you have every reason to believe that general prosperity, as the result of tariff reform, would bring about, how long would it take you to get out of debt and fling that mortgage into the fire?”

“Five crops would do it sure, Major, and give my family a better living than ever before, with less slave-work for every member of my household.”

“Have you the courage, Mr. Nagle, to do your part in bringing about this tariff reform? In your individual case, its success will lift you out of the mire, because the holder of the mortgage will not be anxious for his money, knowing that his security would be abundant, insuring the prompt payment of the interest, and some day, after tariff reform shall have been established, you will have to thrust the principal upon him, because loaning money to farmers will then, in a great measure, become a lost art.”

“Yes, I see I am personally interested in more ways than one, in this grand reform, and I dare do anything that is honorable and manly to help bring it about.”

“Then vote for men for Congress, and other officers, who favor a reduction of the tariff. If the party with which you are identified don't pronounce for the reform, let your party do without you until the reform wins the day, and when that is done, and you care to go back to your party, go back. But until the party which declares for this reform, is victorious, your place is

with that party. If you have greater love for your party than the success of an issue that will put you on your feet, and clear you of debt, you can keep on trying to extricate yourself from the mire, and see where you will be when you can struggle no more."

"You have said enough, Major Holbrook, I see my duty clearly. I would be false to myself, and place in jeopardy for all time the happiness and welfare of my family, should I fail to cut away from the party which favors a high-protective tariff. There is but one place for me to go, and that is into the ranks of that party which stands pledged to support a reduction of the tariff on the necessaries of life, and the complete abolition of the tax on raw material. I am right glad I have had this conversation with you, Major Holbrook. You have furnished me food for thought, and I propose to discuss the subject with my neighbors at every opportunity I get."

"When you do talk this matter over with them," added Major Holbrook, "impress upon them the great truth that the tendency of the times is toward the cheapening of everything consumed by mankind. In the race for low prices for things the world eats, the farmer will be left way behind, unless he uses all the political power he possesses, to cast aside those artificial barriers which stand between the prices he gets for the things he sells, and the prices he pays for the things he buys. The world will keep insisting on having bread and meat low. The farmers will drop out of the race, and become mere serfs, unless they insist on having clothing, agricultural implements, lumber and all the necessaries of life

they do not themselves produce, correspondingly low. They can survive the contest which seems to be closing in upon them, by contending for the complete abolition of so much of the tariff, as is levied exclusively for protection. Good-bye."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.

One day the news spread rapidly through the neighborhood that Major Holbrook was seriously ill. A malarial fever was having its run with a constant uncertainty as to the sick man's recovery. Mrs. Winters was a frequent visitor at the Major's house, making herself so useful in the sick room, relieving Mary and the nurse of a part of their cares and duties, that they beseeched her to make her home for a time with them, so that she might, with less inconvenience to herself, render the assistance she proffered. Seeing that Mary was worn out and likely to break down, Mrs. Winters consented, and was placed in charge of the house.

A male nurse was needed, and inquiries for one were made at the county seat. In time a strong, stout, middle-aged, gentlemanly-appearing stranger applied for the place. His interview was with Mrs. Winters. She employed him and installed him in his work.

There was a mysterious something about this man and his habits which Mary oftentimes found herself trying to fathom, and the most singular thing was the mystery seemed to involve Mrs. Winters with it. Why or how no one that noticed it could tell. Mary threw it off with the thought that at the worst it was only a shadow of suspicion. Mrs. Winter's early

history was a blank as far as the people in the neighborhood knew anything of it. While she had lived since coming there the life of a Christian woman, and while her character was pure and spotless, yet the closest observers had, from time to time, noticed a strangeness in her actions which created a feeling that something was wrong. Men unknown in the community had been seen loitering after night in the shadow of the trees that grew near her house. They came, no one knew from where, and they went no one knew whither. She was never known to mention the name of husband. If he were dead she never told it. If he were living she never mentioned it. Yet she had a son she idolized. Why silently feed the mysterious with mystery?

The stranger faithfully applied himself to the work assigned him. He gradually won the respect, and, it may be, the confidence of the sick man. He studied to please Major Holbrook. He labored to make his services indispensable. There was, however, a coolness between him and Mrs. Winters which others could not help noticing. Why was the man nurse, who was only a temporary employe of the household, and a stranger, too, and who when his services were no longer required would go as he had come, a stranger, worthy of even being shunned by Mrs. Winters?

The man soon became a necessity at Major Holbrook's bedside. No nurse ever more faithful served the sick, than did that stranger serve Major Holbrook. He was ever on the alert to make himself useful, and he succeeded in so ingratiating himself

into the affections of Mary and the physician, and the nurse, by little acts of kindness to all of them, and by his constant devotion to the failing invalid, that all were ready to trust him and put the utmost confidence in his honor and integrity. To all these marks of respect shown the stranger, Mrs. Winters demurred by looks and signs, which seemed to be never understood, but she communicated her thoughts to no living person. She evidently wanted to warn the family of something connected with the stranger's presence, but her lips were sealed. She was the woman of mysteries.

One morning, after a restless night, the sick man called Mrs. Winters to his bedside. He told her he believed he had but a few hours to live. He assured her he was prepared to die, but he was in doubt as to a future world. "Where could heaven be," had been the subject of his thoughts for weeks. Could Mrs. Winters, whom he always found so sensible and wise in worldly matters, give him some reasonable theory as to where God might put the souls of men, when life on earth was ended? then he would die full of faith in the power of the Almighty to redeem the promises made by Christ.

Mrs. Winters stood aghast. She was astonished that a man of Major Holbrook's intelligence and information, whose life was spotless and blameless, whose mature years had been spent in doing good to his fellow-man, who, though making no outward profession of religion, was known to be a Christian, should, on the verge of the grave, harbor a doubt as to the existence of a future state.

The good lady controlled her feelings the best she could. She understood the situation at once. Major Holbrook had not seen heaven, had never seen any one who had, and now he was in doubt whether there was a heaven or not.

“Major Holbrook,” replied Mrs. Winters, “it is these kinds of doubt by men of practical good sense, on their death-bed, that are wearing upon the Christianity of the Bible, as the constant dripping wears the stone. You ask me if I can tell you where heaven is? I know not, nor do I care, nor should you. The Divinity that could stud the heavens with worlds upon worlds, may, for aught I know, have provided a home as large as this earth for each immortal soul. Puny man in the hands of Deity is but as one drop of water in a million oceans. It is no more effort for the Almighty to prepare a heaven for your soul, Major Holbrook, than for Him to make a grain of sand or a breath of air. When God shall take your spirit from its frail tenement, He will not leave it to wander aimlessly about in space through all eternity, but He will go with it and show it the way to its new home. With such a guide you can have no fear but the heaven will be found. As you have ever believed in God’s promises, have faith now that He will fulfill them.”

The dying man gave the Christian woman a look of satisfaction as if to acknowledge the justness of her mild reproof, and to accept her words of hope and comfort. His lips parted as if he would say something more. That the end was nigh was evident. The household were quickly summoned, but



no word did he utter. Mary, weeping as one whose cup of sorrow was full, held one of her father's hands. Mrs. Winters, calm and almost stoical, held the other, and the stranger bathed the dying man's temples. A sigh, a groan, a fluttering heart, and all was over.

## CHAPTER X.

### WHY SHE REFUSED TO MARRY MAJOR HOLBROOK.

In a drawer where Major Holbrook had kept his private papers there was found, after his death, the following letter written by Mrs. Winters:

TO MY DEAR FRIEND STEPHEN HOLBROOK:

Yesterday I told you I would give you my reasons in writing, for refusing your offer of marriage. I now fulfill that promise.

I was an only child. I was born in a New England factory town, in the year 18—. My father was the senior member of the firm of Winters & Groundwig, who owned and operated a large woolen mill, and were considered quite wealthy. I was given as good an education as the seminaries of those days furnished young ladies. At the age of nineteen I graduated, not at the head of my class, but with my mind well stored with book lore. On my return from school, I took a great interest in the welfare of the operatives in the mill, and was constantly busy in various ways trying to improve their condition. Silas Groundwig was the city partner, and received and sold the goods manufactured at the mill. He visited the factory three or four times a year, and each visit he sought to make his coming and his stay as agreeable to me as possible. It did not take me long to perceive that his politeness grew out of something more than friendship, so I can hardly say I was surprised when he asked my hand in marriage. While I had no particular reason to dislike him, I did not entertain that love for him that I felt I should warrant me in accepting his offer. I lost no time in telling him so, and with real sadness and sorrow I acquainted him with the state of my feelings toward him, and we parted.

A few months afterwards I heard mutterings among the operatives about pay-day having passed without their wages being handed them. At this time my mother died, and after the funeral, upon visiting the factory, I learned that matters were in a worse condition than ever. I asked my father to take me into his confidence and tell me all, and he then informed me that his partner had invested the money of the firm in schemes that proved worthless, and that the factory would have to be sold to satisfy the mortgage which had been placed upon it. I saw that such a proceeding would leave the operatives—men, women and children—without money, without food, and with scant raiment, and, in many instances, without shelter. I knew that Mr. Groundwig was a man of many resources, and I was not long in reaching his office, and impertuning him to come to the aid of the penniless operatives. He did not appear a hard-hearted man. He was a business man in every sense of the word. The world might have called him cold, and it may be the world was right, but I thought I detected in him a warm, sympathetic heart. So, when he referred to the love he once had for me, and assured me it had grown stronger with time, and when he again asked me for my hand, and gently intimated that we could together do for the operatives what I had implored him to do alone, I yielded, not for love, but for humanity, not because of any affection I had for him, but that almost a whole village full of people I loved, and I loved them the more because they were poor and needy, might not be turned out into the world friendless and homeless.

We were married. The factory hands were paid all that was coming to them. They never knew that the one they loved so much, made the greatest sacrifice a woman can make for their sake. I did not know myself, then, how great the sacrifice was. How bitterly I have learned it all since. A few months after the marriage my father died. I think he believed to the hour of his death that I had married a man I did not love to save my father from bankruptcy. My great sacrifice bore bitterer fruit than that.

A boy babe was born to gladden my heart. My whole soul

was wrapped up in the child. There was no one else for me to love. There was none other to love me. The father of my darling boy had continued his speculations and lost all he possessed, and, on the day my child was born, my husband came to my bed chamber and demanded I should sign a paper transferring to him all the property my father had left me at his death. I refused, and the man who had the right to call me by the holy name of wife, in that hour, if in no other, when angels should guard the mother's couch, struck me a savage blow, and then passed beyond my threshold, out into the world, no longer my husband, except in name. If he could have then gone to his grave instead of afterwards returning to my presence, much of the sorrow I have borne, and many of the tears I have shed, would have been spared me.

For seven years he remained away. I heard of him from time to time as an adventurer seeking a livelihood by dishonest means. One day he returned to my home. He claimed my boy—my darling boy. His boy. Though the father had never seen the child, though he had aimed a blow at the mother on purpose to kill the babe, though he had abandoned his family and left the mother alone to care for the child, yet the lawyer told me there was danger that the law might take my boy—understand, my boy—and give him to his unnatural father.

I waited no longer; hastily packing a few clothes in a bundle that I could carry in my hand, writing a note to my lawyer, instructing him to collect my rents and remit the proceeds as I should afterwards direct, and giving him permission to rent my home, I clasped my boy by the hand, and I remember to this moment with what thrilling fervor he returned that grasp, and out into the darkness and the storm we went together—my boy and I. Cared I not where I went, nor how fearfully the storm raged, how vivid the lightning, how swollen the streams, how dangerous the bridges, for the danger ahead, no matter what it might be, even if unto death, if death would come to both alike, was sunshine and depthless joy to the immeasurable horror of the danger which lurked behind.

I was by no means poor. I had on my person quite a sum of money. But money then was dangerous. It might lure



me into the very jaws I was fleeing from. To board the midnight train simply meant that on the morrow the telegraph and the law would stay my journey. To procure a conveyance and ride across the country to a railroad station where none knew me, or my boy, or my story, would only put pursuers on my track. I need not relate that night's experience. I refer to it now with dread and horror. I found kind friends who aided me and my boy to flee.

One afternoon we reached the village of Bradford, then a quiet, secluded little settlement in the great teeming West, where I felt my boy was safe. I changed my name to Matilda Winters. It was my grandmother's name. I need not excuse that act. Before my God I feel I was justified in doing anything not criminal, that would prevent being robbed of my boy.

My life here is familiar to you and the good people of this neighborhood. I have sought to do good to my fellow-men and fellow-women, and trust that when I am dead some one will have cause to say that the world is a little better for Aunt Matilda's having lived in it.

I had not been living among my good neighbors many months before I discovered that the farmers were not prospering as they ought, that instead of laying up money for their old age and for their children, many of them were running in debt and mortgaging their homes. I found the farmers were anything but drones, they were always at work, their wives did their share of the drudgery, and the children were not idle. The land was rich and yielded bountiful crops. The stock thrived and ready sales were found for the surplus. Why should not the farmer prosper? Other industries were in a flourishing condition. The farmers alone, as a class, obtained less profits from their investments, not counting the additional labor they performed, than were realized in manufacturing, mining and transportation business. Why was this?

My investigations led me to the conviction that the cause was the unequal and unjust taxation imposed on the farmers by the tariff laws. Providing myself with facts and figures I sought to open the eyes of the farmers to the robbery of which

they were the especial victims. In this good work you have ably assisted me, and in their name I thank you. This community knows the nature of the work we both have done. I believe we have sown good seed. I believe the farmers in this and adjoining neighborhoods, are beginning to see that high tariff is robbery, not robbing all occupations alike, but selecting the farmers from among the great industries of the land, and relieving them of the greater share of their earnings, and putting the proceeds into the pockets of those who operate the other industries. We have time and again proven to the farmer that he is being taxed into bankruptcy and taxed into the grave. Every drop of sweat that trickles down his cheeks stands for a contribution, larger or smaller, to the owners of industries who claim they can not prosper without such contributions. No one contributes anything to the support of the farmer, but he contributes nearly one-half the amount he spends for the necessaries of life, to make richer the rich. He will not always submit to this great injustice, he will not always be willing to increase the weight of his own burdens, simply because he has not the courage to break away from his party and vote for men to make the laws who favor tariff reduction. He is fast coming to the conclusion, with his own experience to convince him, that a high tariff for protection is merely a legal excuse for plundering him of the greater part of the income of the farm. His relief will come when he dare say he is ready for it. The remedy for all the grievances growing out of the tariff for protection, is in his own hands. I believe he is about ready to apply it.

But, my dear friend, I have digressed, and I return to my story. Four years passed and I was beginning to make myself believe that my hiding-place would never be discovered by the father of my boy. It was not to be so.

One evening, just at dusk, my darling Henry came running into the house, all out of breath, and when he could speak, he told of meeting a stranger who had asked several questions about his mother, and had bade him run home and say that Silas Groundwig, an acquaintance of years ago, would call at once to see me. Ere the boy had finished his message,

the man came. I remembered too well that name. It was my husband, the father of my boy. My heart ceased to throb. At least I thought it did. When the hot blood ought to have coursed through my veins with lightning speed, it failed to do its work, and I stood before the man transfixed with horror, speechless, but fortunately I did not lose my consciousness.

"Well, Madame, this is a rather cold reception to extend to your husband after the long chase you have given him."

His voice brought me to myself. In a moment I gathered strength, not the puny strength of a weak woman, but the strength of a giant. The blow he gave me years before on that bed of pain, seemed to be inflicted again, and again it stung me to the heart. I looked about me and saw we were alone. I was so thankful my boy had returned to his play. Coolly and calmly as I write these words, I gazed on that man. I saw he was a wreck, and that kind of a wreck which is all danger. I looked him straight in the eye. There was no hope there. His lips were firmly closed though livid with an ashen hue. I saw the color come and go in his face, as if his brain was busy with the past. With the utmost deliberation, and with a boldness that chilled me through, I replied:

"Sit down, sir."

"No, I prefer to stand."

"As you please," I answered.

"Susan Groundwig!"

At the mention of that name I started as though he had struck me and my boy another blow. I was subdued in a second. I became weak and meek as a little child. All my great courage had gone from me. I was helpless and powerless. I felt I was again at that man's mercy. A dread of a terrible something about to happen unnerved me, and I waited with breathless anxiety the next step in the drama. Was it to end with a tragedy?"

"Susan Groundwig," and again I started at the sound of that name, "you do not answer. Do you not know your name? You may forget it, but you can not forget you are my wife."

"Silas Groundwig," at last I found strength and courage

to say, "you have no right, sir, to call me by that name. When a husband strikes his wife and her unborn babe a blow with intent to kill both, he has no right, God-given or man-given, to ever again come into that mother's presence and pollute the air she breathes with a word from his lips. To save my child from your merciless clutches, I fled from my home. To all I held dear on earth, my boy and I bade an eternal farewell. Mother's grave, father's memory, the home of my childhood, all, everything, I fled from, to escape your threat to carry off my child. At last you have found me. And now, Silas Groundwig, what is it you wish?"

For more than a minute, which seemed an hour, he stood before me and answered not a word. He was pale and white and still as a dead man right from the grave. Finally the painful stillness was broken by Groundwig exclaiming:

"Susan Groundwig, the business which brought me here can be easily arranged if you wish it; and long before the clock strikes ten I can be on my way out of your presence—as my presence seems so hateful to you—never again to return. It is for you to say—not for me; or before the clock shall strike again, I can signal my comrades, who are hard by to seize your boy and take him forever from your sight."

"O! my God, help me," I cried, and would have fallen to the floor had not my darling boy that moment opened the door and entered the room. In as unconcerned a manner as possible I bade him go to his chamber and retire as it was his bed-time. He saw his mother was in trouble and he hesitated. A pleasant look reassured him and he passed out of the room and up the stairs. O! if he could only have fled. If he could only have seen the danger and gone out into the world, in any direction, anywhere, I would rather have felt that he was a wanderer, homeless and motherless, and that I could have searched for him with the hope that at some time in the future I would find him, than that he should fall into that man's power. This thought caused me to realize my situation, and I found myself trying to comprehend the meaning of the words he had uttered. He will depart—never to return—and it is for me to say whether he shall or not? What can he mean? So meditating I found strength to say:



"Silas Groundwig; what is it you seek?"

"Madame, I want nothing but what you can comply with. I am poor; I am an outcast in the world. I have been driven to desperate deeds to make the world give me a living. I am at the mercy of worse outlaws than myself. They have come hither at my bidding to obtain money. You shrink back. But money will satisfy them, and money will satisfy me; you have money here in this house. I know what you brought with you. I know what your agent has sent you as the proceeds of the sale of your father's property. I know of your dealings with your neighbors, and I want and must have five thousand dollars! I do not care to argue the matter. I see by the horror pictured on your face that you are shocked at my proposition, and hence you understand it. So be it; you are a truthful woman; you will not deny having that amount of money, because you dare not lie. It will count nothing for you to claim that a portion of the money in your possession is the savings of your neighbors, who have left it in your care for safe keeping. It will avail nothing to plead that you can not give me other people's money, but will give me your own. It is useless to say that to comply with my request you make yourself and your boy beggars, and, in the opinion of your neighbors, yourself a thief. I care nothing for such pleas. Neither do my comrades outside; whose mutterings you can hear this moment. There is no time to lose. I must signal them to come in for money or your boy. They have been promised one or the other."

Where now was my God that He didn't strike that wretch dead as he stood there, with such words on his lips? I am to rob myself, rob my boy, rob my friends and go forth on the morrow a beggar and a thief, and for what? Heavens! to save my child! Can I longer hesitate? Money, honor, reputation—everything I have in the world must go if my boy would stay. My head grew dizzy. The room was whirling round. I felt I must not lose my consciousness, or my boy was lost. I involuntarily led the way to my bedroom. He followed me. I took from its hiding-place a key. I unlocked my writing desk. I touched a secret spring in a drawer. I pointed to

the exposed money. Not a word is said. He seizes the roll of bank bills, gives me a demoniac look, which came to me afterward in my dreams time and time again, and then he passed through the open door and out into the darkness of the night, leaving me in the darkness of despair, in woe and gloom unfathomable.

I must have swooned, because I knew nothing more until I was aroused by my boy frantically calling upon me to speak to him, and in the next breath telling me, in the most excited manner, that we were robbed!

Robbed? By whom? Robbed! Was there not in this one word the way to escape from the charge of stealing the hard earnings of my neighbors—the savings they had so confidently entrusted to my keeping, having faith in my honesty and integrity? Why not go out into the neighborhood and proclaim that burglars had broken into my house and robbed me of my treasure? No! My treasure was left me. My boy stood before me. The money was gone, but, God be thanked, my treasure was clinging to his mother's neck.

Why not tell my neighbors that their money and mine was stolen, and I was a beggar? No! I could not tell that story, because it was not true. I had invited that man into my room. I had opened the secret drawer. I had pointed out the money. I had motioned him to take it and flee. That was not robbery; that was—O, heavens! what was it? What crime had been committed, and who committed it? Was I a criminal for consenting that my husband should carry away other people's money? Why was I not the criminal? I held the money as a sacred trust for others. I had violated that trust by permitting another to take that money. Why did I violate that trust? Ah, I see. Now comes my better angel to again sit in judgment on my conduct. I gave the wealth of others and all I had of my own that my boy might be spared me—that he might not be stolen from me. Was that a sin known to God? Was that a crime known to men? Will that angel condemn me?

But hold! Go not from me, blessed comforter; you have helped me for my sake, now help me for others' sake. I know

I am innocent of any crime. How shall I impress that innocence upon those who trusted me with their treasure? How can they be made to believe that I gave their money to save my child? And even were they to believe my story, would they justify me in sacrificing their savings for such an object? It was my child—not theirs. I do them wrong. Some of them are mothers, and all of them have hearts. They have trusted me, lo! these many years. They will not forsake me now! God be thanked that I know they will not.

Still how can I tell my neighbors all the circumstances which led up to the loss of the money. While I have never said I had no husband, yet my silence at times must have led my friends to think my husband was dead. To now confess he lived and had threatened to steal my boy, required more nerve and more courage than I possessed. I began to reproach my heavenly Father for forsaking me in my sorest need. Had He not promised to relieve “the fatherless and widow?” I forget. I am not a widow. My boy is not fatherless. But worse—a thousand fold worse—am I and my boy. What can I do? What is it my duty to do? If I could only see my duty as God sees it, I would do it, let results be what they may. There comes my boy from school now. I must dry these tears. There must be no tears for my loved boy to kiss away from his mother’s cheeks. He seems excited and is out of breath. He sees me through the window. He is waving a letter. Another moment and he bounds into the room, and throwing a sealed envelope in my lap, fairly shouts to me to open it and read the letter quick, because the postmaster says he has just received a dispatch, asking him to deliver the letter to me at once and have me telegraph an answer. There comes the postmaster up the lane now. Open it, mother; read it, read it quick. I looked at the boy in amazement. A dispatch. A letter. An answer must be telegraphed quick. What does it mean? More trouble? Is not my cup full? Is there room in this fast-throbbing heart for more sorrow? Can there be any more tears in these weary eyes? Mechanically I tear open the envelope. The letter is from my New England home. I care not for the date. “Dear

madam" are idle words. A piece of paper drops upon the floor. My boy picks it up and holds it before me as I read:

Enclosed you will find a draft on the Bank of Commerce, city of New York, for the sum of three thousand dollars, payable—[my eyes fail me. I can read no further. There is plenty of room now for tears. The mist grows thicker. The postmaster begs pardon for obtruding upon my privacy at such a time, but says it is important that he telegraph my answer at once. I hand him the letter and ask him to finish reading it. He reads:]—to your order. In re-organizing the Nanticoke Woolen Mill Company there is a scramble going on for shares. In searching for the several shareholders it has been discovered that the assignment by your father of the forty shares owned by him to your former husband, is not only irregularly entered on the transfer books, but is a forgery. The company at once repaid the dividends, amounting to three thousand dollars, and that amount I herewith remit you by enclosed draft. To enable the friends of your lamented father to obtain a majority of the shares in order to control the property and take it from those who are trying to depreciate its value by bad management, so they can buy the stock for much less than its real value, I can sell the forty shares which were your father's, and which are now yours, for five thousand dollars. As the election of directors will be held on the 21st instant a speedy answer, and by telegraph, is necessary. I advise you to sell,

Truly yours,

SAMUEL EDMONSON.

It required but a moment for me to conclude what I would do. Mr. Edmonson had proved himself honest and faithful to my interests. I could trust him now. My answer went quick. "I accept" In a few days another draft came, and my faith in that divinity which doeth all things well was restored, and from the most miserable of beings I became the happiest.

Thus you see, my kind friend, that the answer I gave you when you asked my hand in marriage, the answer you thought so cruel and heartless, was the only one I could give you. I know the courts are open for me to apply for a severance of the marriage bonds. But I can never consent to do an act that will serve to withdraw from me, in the least degree, the good opinion and warm regard of my neighbors. Your friend,

MATILDA WINTERS.



## CHAPTER XI.

### LOVERS ON THE LAKE—KIDNAPED.

What more charming or fascinating time and place for lovers than an evening on such a craft, on so beautiful a lake. The month of August has fairly entered on its second week. The slowly lengthening twilight brings with it myriads of objects to see and hear. The long shadows of bluff and trees, which have darkened the water in big spots, seem to have spread until they cover all the lake, and it is all shadows now or no shadows, just as fancy pictures. The fields are full of flowers, and the forests are full of birds. The katy-did is whistling its monotonous notes, closing with a low trill attempting the difficult feat of singing in a whisper, and perched on distant fence-posts the mated quails, claiming the weather prophet's skill, are announcing the prospect of "more wet." The prairie chicken drums and drums, and fancies the noise a song, while the cooing doves, visiting in pairs, make most plaintive wailings, as though mourning and loving were to them the same. The owl, awakening from his all-day sleep, stretches out his neck from beneath his wings and hoots a warning to his prey. The golden-rod, the wild sunflower, the broad expanse of prairie blossoms fresh from their sun-baths, nod in the gentlest of gentle breezes, and open their invisible mouths to catch the dews of the night. The beautiful daisy and the pretty

morning glory have gone to sleep until the rising sun shall bid them awake. The whippoorwill sits on the dead branch of an old oak near the water's edge, and tells all the world within hearing that he is a whippoorwill and must be listened to. The blue bird and the wren hop from limb to limb, twitter and chatter, and go to sleep chattering. The cows, with quickened pace, move in single file along the narrow path by the side of the bluff, chewing their cud, looking so demurely out of their great, brown eyes, bowing familiarly to every bush and shrub, hastening to reach home before night-fall. On the brow of yonder bluff, where the rays of the sun are lingering and departing, it is said an Indian maiden threw herself into the waters below rather than wed against her will.

The sky, too, is full of the glory of the Lord, and lovers are both deaf and blind if they find no time for silent admiration of such grandeur. Yonder, almost in the zenith, is Jupiter, shining so brightly and looking so proud because he is the king of the heavens even for a brief hour, and over in the eastern sky is Cassiopeia, queen of matchless beauty, and as if admiring the milky way the beautiful Cygnus with outstretched wings looks every inch a swan, and now the great, round, red moon breaks the horizon and climbs majestically up the clear sky, and the big, bright stars and the dim little ones, all hide their heads, and even Jupiter himself fades away, and the shadows come again and cover the borders of the lake with phantoms of various shapes affording the imagination an easy opportunity to fancy any image

the brain can design or desire. Light breezes sigh mournfully through the trees, and joining high up above the waters of the lake, the winds that swept from the distant prairie, seem like dismal murmurings and harsh mutterings coming from human voices among the clouds; or it may be these strange, weird noises are voices of spirits from the tombs of the mound-builders holding converse with the spirits from the graves of the long-buried Indians. These mysterious noises come with the darkness, and go only with the light of the morning.

The moon is now well on its journey across the sky.—The fields and river and lake and farm houses are as plainly visible as at noonday. The symmetrical stacks of grain stand out boldly as if saying “we are the staff of life for man and beast.” The hay has been harvested and the long racks mean that well-fed cattle shall reward the husbandman for his labor. The fields and meadows have been shorn of their wealth of food, except the broad acres of Indian corn whose luxuriant growth makes the farmer smile as he dreams of fat herds and a fat purse. That snapping, crackling, rustling noise which is the only sound that breaks upon the stillness of the night, is the growing corn. It is pushing, driving and crowding itself out of the silken tassel into the ear, returning to the ploughman sixty and even ninety fold of increase, the reward promised him for his labor and his faith.

The lights in the farm houses have long since been extinguished. The stillness of the night becomes oppressive. Strange that the bosom of the lake should be undisturbed by even a ripple, while high

up in the sky the elements should be at war. The herdman's dog gives out an occasional bark to let his master know he is an honest dog. Now and then a dismal howl, though in perfect concert, comes from a pack of wolves that have ventured from their den to seek plunder for themselves and sucklings. Save these infrequent disturbers of nature's stillness, and the ever present commingling of those supernal voices in the upper air, all over the broad surface of the lake, and all over the fields and through the forests, as far as eye can see or ear can hear, there reigns the quiet of the churchyard at the midnight hour.

Some people would think it was no time nor place for youth and maiden of flesh and blood to talk of love. But lovers are on the lake—Henry and Mary are there—and they have been telling over and over again the story of their love. Of all this chapter recounts, not a thing have they seen or heard. Mary has appeared unusually melancholy, perhaps because this was their first meeting on the lake since her father's death. As if to change the subject of her thoughts, Henry had taken from a small plush box, which he carried in his hand, a mass of trinkets and a bundle of letters, and was telling the lovely creature that wrote them the contents of each, that she might have another test of his love. This pleasing task finished, the trinkets and letters were replaced in the bundle, and Mary, taking a piece of blue ribbon from her hair, tied the package securely and returned it to her lover, who carefully deposited it in the box. Then, aware of the lateness of the



hour, Henry fitted an oar between the skulling pins and quickly skulled the boat to its usual landing place.

Arm in arm they wend their way slowly to Mary's home. The good-byes are said, but leave-taking seems to be fraught with feelings of sadness on the part of both.

Can it be the weird and ghostly night on the lake has made their hearts heavy and cast a gloom over a farewell which is only for a day? Or did they each see, and dare not tell the other of what they saw, the shadows of men who thought themselves hidden behind the shade trees that lined the lane? Did the presence of those men in such hiding places, at such a time, betoken harm to the lovers? If either thought so neither betrayed the thought by word or look. A pressure of the hand, a loving kiss, a trembling "good night," and the lovers parted, not for a day as each fondly believed, but for years. Years full of sorrow and sadness—years full of gloom and death.

Mary lingered on the threshold of the door and by the light of the bright moon saw her lover disappear into the little grove which grew between the two farms. It was only a few rods then to his home, and he surely must reach it in safety. Why not? Nothing yet had harmed him and why should she think there was danger in his pathway now? Striving hard to throw off a nervousness which seemed to press upon her heart, she shut the door and retired to her chamber.

Henry had gone but a short distance in the grove

when two stout men bounded from behind the trees, and, quicker than it takes the pen to tell it, they grappled with him, forced a gag into his mouth, pinioned his arms behind him, and then noiselessly hurried him through the grove, past his home where he could see the light in the window, then across the fields to the road where a wagon and two horses were in waiting. Henry was made to take a seat in the vehicle, and one of the kidnapers sat by his side, and the other caught up the reins and drove slowly towards the east. He was informed if he kept quiet and made no efforts to escape, nor sought in any way to give an alarm, and would promise not to attempt to communicate with any person, the gag would be removed and his arms unpinioned. Believing his only hope for escape was by obtaining as much freedom as possible, Henry made the promise. He was told he would not be harmed if he was submissive and went quietly with them wherever they desired, but at the first attempt to break away or to cry out for help, or by look or sign to attract the attention of any person they should meet on the road, or in cars or on boats, he would be shot, let the consequences to them be what they might. They would take all the risks.

Henry realized that he was in the hands of desperate outlaws. Why he was in their hands and what was to be done with him was a mystery so cunningly planned that not a thread was exposed that would aid him in unraveling it. Perhaps they had mistaken him for another, and when the mistake was discovered, they would let him go. To all his inquiries his keepers gruffly refused to answer a

word. So Henry concluded it would be wise to acquiesce in their wishes and make no outcry.

After a day and night's ride, a halt was made in a dense forest, and Henry was led to a large dugout in the side of a hill, and compelled to take up his abode there. From time to time he overheard enough of the conversation which passed between two of the men to learn that it was the desire of the third, who seldom showed himself, to keep the young man a prisoner until the accomplishment of a certain purpose, but what that purpose was Henry could not obtain the least intimation. One day the third man brought a sum of money, which he divided between the two jailers. Hardly had the man disappeared, before his two associates were planning how to get rid of their charge without the knowledge of their companion. It was finally agreed they would take him to New York and ship him as a deckhand on some vessel bound for a distant foreign shore. They would thus get rid of their prisoner without further trouble to them, and, as far as concealing him from his pursuers was concerned, their plan was a better one than to keep guard over him in the cave; and they could not see why the purpose of his imprisonment might not be just as well attained.

To suggest was to act. In another hour the team was ready, and the three started on their journey. Reaching a lake port, they embarked on board a sailing vessel loaded with grain. The lake trip consumed several days, and then a night's ride and part of the next day on the cars, brought the party to the city of New York.

## CHAPTER XII.

### ON THE OCEAN — DANGEROUS RESEMBLANCE.

The same afternoon the party reached New York, Henry was conveyed on board a vessel about to sail for the East Indies. For several days he had been in a dazed condition, as though partially under the influence of opiates. His ambition had deserted him. He took everything as a matter of course, and did not care whether the outcome was life or death. He was content with all his surroundings, and did not possess the courage to protest against anything his jailers did. So when he was placed in charge of the steward of the vessel, he felt as though he was going on a pleasure voyage, and his kidnapers were doing him a kind service by giving him an opportunity to travel and see the world.

On the morrow all was changed. The vessel was far out at sea. Henry awoke as if from a long sleep. He began to recall the scenes and events which led up to his being put on board ship. All his keen senses had returned. The steward noticed his disturbed look, and asked him if he could serve him in any way. From the steward he learned that the master of the vessel was informed by the men who accompanied Henry on board, that he was wild and ungovernable, having a disposition to commit crime, and to keep him from evil company that was leading him to the gallows, his parents had deemed it best to send him on a long sea voyage.



The mystery grew. He could not even conjure up a suspicion that would help him solve it. The more he pondered over the strange and bold proceedings, the greater the mystery. Could he only have written a line to his mother or to Mary, he would have been more reconciled to the long journey before him. The assault, the capture and the flight had been done so noiselessly, and the wicked scheme had been carried out so adroitly, that the neighborhood would never know, except as he should live to return and tell the story, who had done it. He knew the whole region would be aroused and search made for him, that the time would come when he would be given up as dead, and the two beings on all the earth he loved the best and most might themselves go down to their graves weeping and mourning because he returned no more to his home.

Such reflections must be abandoned. The right to hope for freedom was at least left him. Resisting the rush of gloomy forebodings, which were tugging at his brain, he determined to brood no more over the great outrage.

On his first appearance among his ship-mates Henry attracted the attention of all the officers of the vessel. Instead of being sullenly disposed or ill-tempered or ill-natured, as those who were knowing of the alleged reasons for his being put on board ship expected, they found him courteous, pleasant and agreeable. He soon became the favorite of all on board—not only of the officers and the few passengers, but of the crew. The Captain at once conceived a liking for the lad, and one day, calling him into his

office, asked him if he would like to keep the ship's records. It did not take him long to make up his mind to accept the offer, adding that he was prepared to make himself useful in any place he might be put.

His work was light, but it was labor requiring care and thoughtfulness, and close attention, and so well did he look after the duties assigned him that the Captain became much attached to him. So that long before the voyage ended, the Captain had not only heard the young man's story, but believed it, and while he had especial instructions not to permit Henry to return with him, but to send him far into the interior of the India country, he had long since come to the conclusion not only to take him back, but to leave no stone unturned to discover the villians that had done the kidnaping, and learn the cause of the outrage. At the first port reached, Henry mailed letters to his mother and Mary, giving a full account of all that had happened to him. The letters were never received. It may be that the gold slipped into the hand of one of the sailors, by one of the kidnapers, as the vessel was unfurling its sails in the harbor of New York, had much to do with those letters going astray, or not going at all.

While in Calcutta familiarizing himself with the sights in that wonderful city, he is hailed by an American and asked how it happened he had returned so soon from Darjeeling. The lad could not conceal his surprise at being approached by a stranger, and promptly replied that he had never been in the city mentioned, and was not aware that he had ever met

the stranger before. "What, is not your name Charles Manning, and was you not my messmate on the voyage here, and did I not leave you a week since at Darjeeling, and did you not make an engagement to meet me here next Monday? Why so silent? What does it mean? Explain, my dear sir. It is not possible for me to be mistaken."

"I assure you," replied Henry, having in mind his strange adventure in America, "I never saw you before in my life. Months ago I sailed from New York on the good vessel, 'Lucky Star,' Captain Bodfish, Master, and I landed here only yesterday. Am I to infer this is a case of mistaken identity, or to what am I to attribute this manner of accosting me by an entire stranger?"

The stranger did not seem unfriendly. Henry, apparently in doubt, was at a loss to understand how such a blunder could have been made. The stranger had evidently been associated with a person who closely resembled Henry Winters. It was with reluctance that he admitted he was mistaken. But upon being assured by Henry that he would remain on board the Lucky Star for several weeks, the stranger asked the privilege of bringing his messmate with him to the vessel, and let the two who looked so much alike meet face to face.

In a few days the meeting took place. Captain Bodfish declared the faces, general appearance and movements of the young men were strikingly alike. He had never seen two persons who so closely resembled each other. The size, weight, build, complexion, color of hair, voice, walk, manner, and, in

fact, all that was characteristic in men, were alike in both. Both were born in New England, neither knew anything of a father, and only Henry knew anything of a mother. But they at once took a liking for each other, and during the remainder of the time the Lucky Star was in port, they were inseparable. Captain Bodfish consented that the new-found acquaintance might sail with him on his home-bound trip, and the Captain gave both light employment.

There was but little work to do, which gave the young men ample time to read such books as were contained in the vessel's library, and learn the history of each other's lives. Together they read the same stories and discussed the writings of the same authors. They talked of the land which gave them birth, and, in fact, they were lost unless in each other's company. But Henry was the most communicative. He had a story of love to tell, and in Charles Manning an eager listener was found. His heart was free. He had been a wanderer, and not a lover. But when the tales of love, as experienced by Henry, were told, Charles became a lover, too. Every word about love that fell from Henry's lips was treasured up as a priceless gem. Every imaginable question was asked of matters that would give Henry an excuse to talk of his home, his mother, his Mary and the people of the neighborhood. All the incidents, trivial or otherwise, of which he had been a party, and especially those that Mary was knowing to, were discussed over and over again. The walks in the woods, the boat rides on the lake, the remarkable sunsets, the school days and boyhood pranks, the full story of



the scenes and events which led up to their plighted troth; the spot was described where Cupid met them and hurled the darts which pierced both their hearts, and all the tales of love were not only told twice over, but as Henry never tired of telling them again and again, so Charles never tired of being a most attentive listener. All the neighborhood gossip of years was run over by Henry, and the charming valley was so eloquently and minutely portrayed, and the names of the people of the settlement—the men, women and children—so often mentioned, and scenes of any moment or interest in which they participated, so frequently described, that Charles became as familiar with everything that had happened in the village from the day Henry and his mother alighted from the cars, to the time when the lad disappeared, as was Henry himself.

From time to time the gifts which Mary had made to her lover, were brought out from their sacred and secret hiding place and the giver idolized. Each little trinket and each gem or jewel had a history, and Henry never tired of telling every incident, no matter how trivial, connected with the gift. There were many amusing stories to tell and many hair-breadth escapes to describe. That chain was made of the down of the ducks that Mary raised and the little circle of faded hair was found in Henry's hand after he had risked his life to save Mary from drowning. There were pretty little charms to show and grow eloquent over in describing and explaining the circumstances connected with their giving, and there were rings and pins and photographs of Henry's

mother and several of the neighbors, and when the intimacy had ripened into devotion akin to love, Henry brought out a bundle of letters, tied with what was once a piece of ribbon, blue at that, or at least it had been blue at one time, but constant handling had faded it to a dingy white and only shreds and ravelings were left, and these required a stretch of the imagination to detect a trace of ribbon. The letters were Mary's and the ribbon had been tied around them by Mary on the evening of Henry's disappearance. So the ribbon had a history. And each letter had a history, and, one by one, the history of each was given. This letter was the first one she wrote. It was an innocent school-girl epistle to a boy and not to a boy-lover. The next was written two or three years later, showing that the child was not a very faithful correspondent, which could hardly have been expected, because, during those years, the little people met about every day. The other letters were taken, one by one, from the little bundle, and the date each was written afforded Henry an excellent opportunity to go over again the lives of the lovers and give more in detail the events in the lovers' lives. The letters were not read. They were too sacred even for the ear of a friend as true and devoted as Charles Manning.

The college life experienced by Henry was often the subject of conversation. Charles was deeply interested in the studies which Henry had engaged in, and was delighted while listening to anything pertaining to either the text books in use or the routine of college life. He was fascinated with the

essay Henry had read at his graduation. Time and time again Henry had recited it at Charles' request. The tariff question was frequently discussed, and Charles was constantly seeking information upon that topic, and would frequently turn the conversation in that direction, even when conversing with the Captain or other officers of the vessel.

That Charles Manning was keen, bright, intelligent and intently apt, was apparent to all who were intimate with him. He possessed a remarkable memory, and he stored his mind with every event Henry had recounted. Not satisfied with relying on his memory he kept a diary and at night all the conversation and incidents of the day were recorded. Nothing was overlooked. So the time came when Charles knew as much of the lives of Henry and Mary as they did themselves.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE SHIPWRECK.

“A little more of a breeze to-day,” said Captain Bodfish, one morning after his vessel had been ~~be~~ calmed for nearly a week. “The air gives signs of a coming storm, and when it does come may the good Lord keep and preserve us.” Even as the Captain spoke a trace of a dark cloud was dimly visible way to the west. To the Captain’s experienced eye the little tufts of uncarded wool so slowly moving along in the direction of the vessel, so near the blue sky and yet so close to the green ocean, meant that the calm had ended and the storm was beginning. The rapidly given orders of the Captain were quickly obeyed and the gallant crew made all the preparations possible for the good ship to receive the gale and ride through it. The winds came as though they had used the days of calm to gather force from all the ocean and all the sky, and in their madness they seemed to see on all that broad expanse of surging waves but one frail ship to wrestle with, and that one they wrecked as though it had been made of paper and manned by little children. Every mast and spar and every stitch of canvas and every soul on board, save five, were swept into the sea. The life boats were torn to pieces as if made of cloth. When the storm ceased and the sun appeared, all that was left of the Lucky Star was a hull, dis-



mantled, dismasted, rudderless and water soaked. The Captain and the two clerks, Henry and Charles, had lashed themselves to a capstan which protruded a few inches above the shattered deck, and when the storm was over they were still lashed there and still living. Two deck hands had tied themselves to one of the ponderous anchors which hung over the ship's side, and they, too, were also saved—five souls in all—five human beings on a wreck, and, as far as they knew, without food or water, or even hope of rescue from a grave in the sea; and, in fact, with nothing but life left them. What was that worth!

On being released, after the storm had somewhat abated, the men counseled together as to what was best to be done. It was evident that the hull would go to pieces should there come another storm or should the wind continue to blow for any great length of time, as it was blowing then. Even while the conversation was going on, the ship swayed to and fro as if making a desperate effort to keep its place on the water. Suddenly it broke apart and all that was left of the ship went down beneath the waves, except a portion of the prow, to which the shipwrecked band clung as their last hope of rescue.

When the hull parted, boxes, barrels, packages of various sorts and pieces of the wreck, came to the surface, and, as they floated by, the men boldly risked their lives to secure some of the debris. Providence helped them, and before nightfall they had stored on their frail craft two barrels of water, a tierce of rice and a cask of brandy. The prow they were on was a compartment by itself, and again, providentially, the

severed end was not stove in or seriously damaged, and to all appearances it was water-tight and might float until a storm should wreck it.

There was no fire nor any way to provide one. The rice, soaked in water, was their food. The water was used sparingly. The brandy was dealt out as medicine. For days and nights the craft floated. If always in the same direction the Captain knew that land must before long come in sight. One evening, when darkness had fully come, a light was seen in the east, and all the night long the now emaciated and well nigh exhausted wreckers took turns watching it, as though it was a friend they did not want to lose sight of. With the early rays of the sun the light, which they believed must be on land, flickered and disappeared, and all that day only the ocean and the sky were visible. At nightfall the light came again, brighter than before and apparently nearer, and then they knew they were approaching land and they rightly conjectured that the light was from a burning volcano. Even the expectation of landing on a coast where only a volcano welcomed them, was exhilarating and exciting. Another day, and land was plainly in sight. Onward the strange craft drifted, nearer and nearer to the rocky cliffs, and now came the danger long feared that the boat would be destroyed by contact with the inhospitable rocks, which everywhere lined the coast. There was no staying the progress of the wreck, even had they desired to, and there was no way of guiding it between the breaks that here and there separated the ragged cliffs. They were now at the mercy of the rocks as well as the

waves, and nothing could be done to avert the fate which seemed in store for them. Instead, however, of floating directly upon the rocks, as was expected, there came a wind from beyond the cliffs and urged the craft along the shore and away from the rocks, until rounding a point, the cliffs abruptly ended, and then the breeze from the sea drove the boat ashore and beached it where the water was but a few feet deep.

The little band was rescued. They were rescued from the dangers of the deep, but who among them knew but there might be greater perils to encounter on the land than they had escaped from on the sea. Thanking God for their deliverance from death by drowning, they again consulted as to their future movements. Around them they saw evidences of the region being inhabited, but whether by civilized people or savages, by friends or foes, was a subject of the gravest apprehension.

The following morning they set out on a tour inland. Before starting on their uncertain journey they gathered withes, which they broke from stunted trees and bushes, and twisting them into a rope, made fast their boat to the trunk of an old tree. They took with them what was left of the cask of brandy, and a supply of rice which they carried in a basket made of leaves, and almost gleefully they turned their backs upon the ocean. Their progress was slow because they were weak, and their limbs, from long inaction, refused to do the work expected of them. Before nightfall they not only became satisfied they were in the neighborhood of a habita-

tion, but they had observed various evidences of civilization. Trees cut smooth and clean, as with a sharp instrument, were lying on the ground. A trail was struck during the afternoon, and this trail was fresh, and made by camels, and that the camels were being led was evident from the tops of the bushes being eaten off only near the trail.

In the morning, after a night's sleep on the ground, the little band resumed their line of march. Hardly were they under way when a human being appeared in their path, and, with outstretched arms, disputed their right to advance. Soon other natives came to their companion's assistance, and a conference was held by the semi-dusky inhabitants of the new-found land. One of their number stepped a few feet in front of the group and motioned the castaways to approach. The meeting was a friendly one, evinced by the natives falling upon the ground and bowing their heads in the dust. After the story of the shipwreck had been told by signs, the leader, partly by signs and partly by very bad, broken English, gave the new-comers to understand that yonder, some miles distant, was a large village to which they would be welcome. The Americans were at once mounted upon camels, and the caravan moved quite rapidly towards the designated village, reaching there early in the afternoon.

Truly a strange and marvelous combination of fortunate circumstances. In the wilds of an unknown continent, this shipwrecked crew find a race of beings, who, while they are not savages, are not civilized, but are superior in intelligence, in



manners and customs, to the Indian or the African. The little raiment that clothes them is of European make, indicating they are in communication with European merchants and European civilization. It is ascertained that some leagues distant is a great river, that a trading point has been established there, and once a year a ship from a distant foreign land comes there and exchanges its wares for the goods the natives have to sell. There are a number of villages tributary to this trading and shipping station, and while the inhabitants spend their time chiefly in indolence and idleness, they all manage to accumulate something to exchange for the merchandise the ship brings.

The Americans embrace the first opportunity to join a caravan that is on its way to the trading point. Reaching there they find a large village whose inhabitants have nothing to do except as the caravans arrive to receive the articles which are brought to exchange for the ship's goods. This point has an ocean front of fully one mile, bound on both sides by high cliffs, as though once the bed of a mighty river. This plateau or table land extends back for hundreds of miles, and on either side are dense forests and vast jungles. Ivory, the skins of wild animals, spices, medicinal roots and herbs, diamonds and other precious stones, and the finest sponges, are the chief articles of export. These are exchanged for wearing apparel, canned meats and vegetables, cheap notions and trinkets.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### POISONED.

The Americans made themselves quite useful to the natives while waiting the arrival of the ship. They planned a system of water supply, by which water was brought into the village from a lake beyond the cliff. The water for ages had been brought in rude buckets, but the inhabitants joined in with zest to dig the trenches, remove the pulp from the logs which were used for water pipes, and in an intelligent manner carried out the plans which Captain Bodfish designed.

Henry and Charles were not as inseparable as formerly. While by no means unfriendly they were less in each other's company. Henry spent much of his time with the natives, and with one or more of them would frequently make long journeys into the edges of the jungle. The natives took a greater liking to him than to either of the others. He alone was shown where the diamonds could be found, and, under a pledge of secrecy as to the locality, was permitted to search for them. He secured many valuable ones which he intended, at the proper time, to divide with his comrades. Charles interested himself in the herbs and roots the natives were gathering, making constant inquiries as to the use and power and effect of those that were considered the most valuable. He watched the natives dive in the deep water for the

sponge, and he became familiar with the process of cleaning and curing them for market. He was ever on the alert to learn something that he might turn to advantage afterwards. He often helped the natives distil the herbs, and prepare the drugs for packing. He was the first to learn to converse with the inhabitants, though this knowledge was more a matter of signs than words. In this great wilderness and waste and among these strange people, as on the Lucky Star, Charles Manning was an apt scholar, quick to grasp the thing that engaged his attention, and whatever he learned or sought to learn was to aid him in carrying out the chief object and purpose of his life. But who beside himself knew aught of what that object and purpose was?

The time was near at hand when the expected vessel might heave in sight. The Americans were full of glee over the promised event. When the rejoicing was at its height, and they were congratulating each other over the prospect of once again joining their kindred and friends at their dear old homes, Henry was taken sick. With each passing hour he grew worse. All the knowledge of disease and its cure possessed by the natives the young man had the benefit of. Charles was by his side constantly, and he claimed the privilege of taking the sole care of his friend, and he nursed him and watched over him with all the tenderness of mother or sister.

One other attendant almost forced herself on the sick youth. She was a young maiden, a brunette of wondrous beauty. She claimed to be the great physician's daughter, and from her father she had

learned the cure of diseases peculiar to the climate and the people, and she knew the uses of the herbs that grew on the hill-side. She had a complete knowledge of the effects on the system of the various poisonous roots which the natives gathered for market. She knew the antidote to each, and where to find it, and how to administer it in case of peril. What interest, if any, more than womanly affection for one in distress, this maiden may have had in Henry was known only to herself, and possibly to Henry himself. Be that as it may, the lad continued to grow worse. The herbs that were so marvelous in their cures failed to bring relief. The ship came in. Henry was bolstered up on his cot, and through the open door saw the ship at anchor only a few rods distant. His heart was now beating strong and fast. The blood filled his veins almost to bursting. The thought of again seeing his mother and the other loved one so dear to his heart possessed all his feelings, was the full measure of all his hopes, and filled to the brim his cup of happiness. For the moment he forgot he was sick. Forgot that even then there might be far less distance between him and his God, than between him and his betrothed.

The ship had sailed from a port in Holland. The captain cheerfully consented to take the Americans on board, and, if opportunity offered, transfer them both to a ship bound for an American port. The ship's physician at once went ashore and visited the sick youth, that he might minister to his needs, and assist in conveying him on board the vessel. He found Henry sinking rapidly and unconscious. The



reaction had set in and he had not vitality enough to resist it. The physician endeavored to rally him with stimulants but was unsuccessful. Even while the last boat was preparing to make the last trip to the ship the Doctor pronounced Henry Winters dead. Living when all hope had gone and only the sea and sky and the remnant of a dismasted bark to lean on. Dead when hope had returned and a ship, with sails and masts and rudder and men to man it, was ready to take him to his home!

It was then that Captain Bodfish rose to the full stature of a noble manhood, and knowing what he had to contend with, and looking the doctor, who still had hold of Henry's hand, square in the eye, thus addressed him: "Doctor, as God lives, that body must go on that ship."

The doctor comprehended the full meaning of that command. It was made by one used to having his orders obeyed. The Captain turned his head and gazed devoutly upon the beautiful face of the lad who seemed to be calmly sleeping. The physician was in deep study and evidently a great conflict was going on in his mind. Charles, kneeling by the side of the cot, had bowed his head as if overcome with anguish. Several natives, who had been intimate with Henry, stood in the background, eager witnesses of the sad scene. The doctor, letting go the dead boy's hand, and returning Captain Bodfish's piercing gaze, at last replied in almost unintelligible English—"Sire, that can never be!"

Captain Bodfish knew too well what that meant. He had made too many ocean voyages and understood

too well the superstition of sailors as regards a dead body on ship board, to make any further appeal. Helpless and powerless, he was compelled to submit.

Hastily the arrangements were made for the burial of poor Henry's body by the natives. Several of the more intelligent among them imposed oaths upon themselves that they would give the dead a Christian burial and mark the spot with a fitting memorial stone.

Then came the speedy preparations for the departure of the Captain and Charles. The two deck hands had already gone aboard. Tears trickled down the honest face of the kind-hearted Captain as he took a last look of his young friend, while Charles could find only sobs to tell the extent of his sorrow. The little boat was ready to leave. A hasty farewell was said to the groups of natives standing by, the boat was pushed from the shore, strong arms speedily rowed to the ship's side, the anchor was hauled in, the sails unfurled, and the Sober Fritz went out to sea.

The living were gone. Now to care for the dead. That same young maiden, so fair and lovely, had gone unbidden into the little cabin where Henry's body was lying, and was now, in a nervous and exciting manner, pouring a liquid into his mouth and nostrils. Others came in quietly and softly and looked on as if understanding the grave nature of the proceeding, and anxiously awaited the result. The girl never took her eyes off the marble face before her. She expected the life to return, and she was not disappointed, for in a short time Henry

opened his eyes, gazed languidly about the room, and, as if exhausted by the effort, fell asleep and slept all the night through.

On awakening, he was told of the departure of the ship, with his companions on board, of his supposed death, the surmise he had been poisoned and the result of the application of the antidote. He was told that Captain Bodfish plead for the body to be taken on shipboard, and how painful it was for the physician to refuse. All, everything, showing the love and devotion of his companions, was told him, and he listened and wondered what it could all mean. During the day strengthening drinks were administered to him, and on the morrow he arose from his cot seemingly strong and fully recovered from his illness.

The mysteries that now overwhelmed the poor lad nearly drove him distracted. He had been poisoned. By whom? He was told that when life was thought extinct, the physician's daughter had detected the evidence of poison, and the changing hue upon the face had revealed the nature of the drug he had taken, and enabled the maiden to obtain the antidote that restored him to consciousness. Who could have perpetrated this great crime?

The locket containing Mary's picture and a lock of her hair had been removed from about his neck. Who did that? Perhaps it was Captain Bodfish or Charles, who would restore the precious gifts to his affianced, with the story of his death in a strange land and his burial by a strange people; or it might be the girl who had saved his life had removed it and hidden or de-

stroyed it. Could it be that this girl had administered the poison when the ship hove in sight, and, with her knowledge of the drug, kept him as one dead until the ship had sailed and then applied the antidote that brought his life back to him? That could not be, because even while his companions were taking a last look of his face, the girl who made one of the group around his cot, suddenly rushed from the room and fled like a deer to the mountains, nor did she return until the last boat had been pushed from shore. On the mountain side she had gathered the life-restoring herb, had steeped it in boiling water, and not a moment too soon had poured the potion down his throat. Had she given the poison, would she not had the antidote ready at the exact time to apply it? No, it could not be the girl who sought his life only to save it. Who was it?



## CHAPTER XV.

### THE WILL IS A FORGERY.

The "Sober Fritz" was at once gotten under sail and by nightfall she was far out to sea. Captain Bodfish could not conceal his feelings. The tears came freely without bidding. He felt he had not only lost a dear friend, but all the circumstances connected with his death were sad in the extreme. Could he even have brought the body on board the ship and given it a burial beneath the waves, he would have been the better reconciled to the fateful events which had occurred.

Charles gave vent to his feelings by loud expressions of sorrow. He had no tears to shed, though he often wished that tears would flow, but he had plenty of words of love and affection for his dead friend, and he never tired of speaking of his merits and extolling his good qualities.

At the first port made by the "Sober Fritz" an American ship was taking on coal, and the Americans found no difficulty in engaging passage for Boston. The voyage was finished in three months, and Captain Bodfish and Charles, having feelingly parted with their two companions, went to the nearest telegraph office, where the Captain notified the New York owners of the "Lucky Star" of her loss, of the Captain's arrival in Boston and his need of funds.

On ship board the Captain and Charles had jointly

prepared a full statement of the voyage made by Henry to India, of the "Lucky Star" sailing for home, of the shipwreck, and the events which preceded Henry's death. This letter was full of sympathy for the sorrow-stricken mother and heart-broken Mary, and, being sealed and directed to Mrs. Winters, was deposited in the post-office by Captain Bodfish. A few moments after he had gone out of the building, Charles asked that the letter, minutely describing it, might be returned to him, he claiming to be the writer, as he wished to enclose a draft, which, in the hurry of mailing, he had overlooked. Obtaining the letter he never remailed it. The same day, the money arriving, Charles was loaned a sum sufficient for his present purposes, which he promised to return in a few days, and the two bidding each other farewell, the Captain went at once to New York and Charles boarded a train for his home in a New England city.

There seemed to be a deal of mystery about the young man, even though now mingling with the people he had been brought up among. He held frequent interviews with a woman always dressed in black, and who never failed to have a heavy black veil drawn over her face. She may have been young or she may have been middle-aged. She may have been beautiful or ugly. Possibly Charles knew. No one else could, unless it were the woman herself. She came mysteriously and she went mysteriously. No one except Charles seemed to care who she was, what she was, or whither she went.

Charles at once obtained a position where he could

learn telegraphing and railway station business. In his conversations with Henry on shipboard, Charles had heard his companion speak of his knowledge of telegraphing. What Henry knew Charles never tired until he learned the same. In connection with his duties in the telegraph office, Charles became a diligent student of political economy, and especially of tariff reform.

For several weeks the woman in black was missed. Upon her return, she and Charles held several long and earnest interviews, and, seemingly, as if in some manner connected with these meetings, Charles one day sent the following telegraph dispatch :

HALIFAX, June —, 188—.

MRS. MATILDA WINTERS: I have just landed here. Will start at once for home. May reach you by Thursday. Was kidnaped, taken to Calcutta; on the voyage home was shipwrecked, detained on an unknown land for nearly two years. Will tell you all when I see you. Love to Mary. Hope you are both well.

HENRY WINTERS.

When the messenger brought the dispatch, Mrs. Winters was lying on her couch sick almost unto death. She was surrounded with loving friends, who sought to prove their devotion by little acts of kindness, but neither kith nor kin were there to comfort her. Yet Mary Holbrook had been to her Mother Winters all that child could be. Their tears had mingled together; for the return of the same lost loved one they prayed together; their hopes were centered on the same object of affection, and the heart of one knew no pain the other did not experience, except the mysterious secret about Major Hol-

brook's will, which the sick woman, for some strange reason, refused to divulge.

Mary read the message first. The trials and sorrows she had experienced nerved her for any event, no matter what it might be. For a moment she was overcome by the glad news. Her thoughts went out to Mrs. Winters, for she feared the effect of such joyful tidings on Henry's mother. With head bowed upon the poor, sick woman's breast, and with arms tenderly entwined around her neck, Mary told her adopted mother of the expected arrival of her son.

Mrs. Winters listened unmoved, then turned her head toward the wall, as if she would be alone with her thoughts. An hour passed. Then, arousing herself and beckoning Mary to come to her bedside, she simply said she prayed to live long enough to take her dear boy by the hand, place it in Mary's, bless her children and commend her spirit to the God that gave it.

Was her prayer answered?

Several days and nights passed, and the hour of Henry's expected arrival was near at hand. A kind neighbor had offered to meet Henry with a carriage and bring him to his home.

During the day, Mrs. Winters appeared to sleep. Her eyes were closed, and she breathed naturally. Suddenly she raised herself up in bed and looked eagerly about the room. She was not excited, but calm and self-composed. Lifting her hand and pointing her long, bony fingers toward the open window, through which the setting sun shone bright and



clear, she exclaimed, in a voice loud and distinct for one so near the grave: "See there! Look yonder! What a beautiful white light! How brilliant it is! How grand! Watch its golden rays spreading out on all sides and in every direction. Nearer and nearer it comes, wider and wider its pathway is extended, and brighter and brighter grows its glittering rays, and now it seems to cover the land with new life, new joys, new hopes, new aspirations, surely promising a new, a better and a brighter future. So I interpret the meaning of the blessed sight I see. Oh, that I might live to enjoy the realization of this wondrous revelation, which I know I alone am permitted to behold. I feel it means the speedy coming of the better times and happier days so long looked for and so long hoped for by the noble farmers of our blessed country. But my strength is failing, my work is finished, and I know I am soon to go to meet my dear Savior."

By this time the bedside was surrounded with loving neighbors, and standing by the head of the dying woman and holding her hand was the faithful Mary Holbrook. Bending tenderly over her, Mary asked if she would like to tell them more about what she had been dreaming.

In a weaker voice, but still sweet and cheerful as a child at play, she answered: "I've not been dreaming, have I? No, no, it could not be a dream. It did not seem like a dream. It was too real for a dream. I was awake, wide awake, and I saw my darling Mary as I see her now, and I saw that flood of light with my open eyes. Listen and I will tell

you more. I see it now. What a change it makes in all it beams upon, and it seems to beam on all this broad continent. It scatters penury and want and haggard faces and tattered rags to the winds of heaven, and in its wake and in their places it leaves plenty and good cheer and smiles and whole garments. The ricketty old farm house, so long going to decay and ready to fall to the ground, is changed to a home of comfort and cheerfulness, and the inmates look upon the transformation with happy smiles and words of joy and thanksgiving. The mother in the doorway stands transfixed with wonder and delight, and she looks heavenward, as if to thank her God for what she sees, but her lips fail to tell the joy she experiences. The pale, shrunken, shriveled and hollow cheeks have their fullness and color returned, the once sunken eyes with returning lustre beam out full and bright and clear from their prison cells; the blood no longer lazily courses her veins, but to her the white light brings new life and new hopes; in a word, a new world opens to her vision, she feels the shackles unloosed from her limbs, and she is free and no longer a slave—restored to that standing in the realm of noble womanhood, from which, for a generation, she had been driven by the greed, avarice and covetousness of her countrymen.

“The growing corn takes on a brighter and richer color, the fields of half-ripened grain, which the eye beholds as far as the eye can see, promise a yield of wealth that for the first time in years will return a liberal profit to the husbandman; the green

meadows give out a newer and fresher verdure, the cattle in the pastures are sleeker and fatter; and the bronzed and stout-limbed farmer who stood silently viewing his acres and his herds, cheerlessly and despondently contemplating the long-continued low prices of farm produce, seeing, sooner or later, beggary and ruin staring him and his family in their faces; pondering over the growing mortgage on all his possessions, with growing doubt and uncertainty of its ever being paid; as he feels the bright rays of the rapidly moving light illuminate his whole being, he sees the clouds which had darkened a long life of patient toil and ceaseless care, disappear in the distance, and he beholds the home of his youth and old age, the home of his blessed wife and loving children, free of debt, his family in the enjoyment of the fruits of his and their labor, and peace and love and plenty and all the desires of his heart poured in upon him. Glorious revelation! May the law-makers of the land make it, as they can, a grand realization."

Matilda Winters spoke as one inspired. Her eyes sparkled, but not unnaturally; her cheeks were flush and radiant, as if with joy; her voice had grown stronger as she proceeded with the word picture of her revelation, and her whole soul seemed clothed with that wisdom which might come from on high. Seemingly in possession of all her senses, she gazed upon the weeping group around her as if she would tell more of her wondrous vision, and give more of her interpretation of it.

The silence was broken by the sound of the rattling

wheels of a carriage approaching the house. The expected one has come. The little group around the bedside retire, all save the weeping girl, who has clasped her hand in that of the dying woman, and the attending physician. The door opens, a young man bounds noiselessly in, rushes to the bedside, kisses the pale cheek of the emaciated woman who lies there so quiet, so weak, so calm, then affectionately embraces the trembling girl, who stands motionless and white as a statue of the purest pæan marble, and implants a kiss upon her lips, which salutation she feelingly and lovingly returns.

The sick woman gazed first upon the young man then upon the young girl, and, without moving a muscle or uttering a word, closed her eyes. The sobbing girl appealed to the dying woman to speak to her, and beseechingly implored her to "give your children—your Henry, your Mary—your blessing. Oh sainted mother, the angels ask this of you. Do not, oh! do not, I beg of you, do not withhold it!" There was a motion of the lips, a pressure of the hand, an effort to speak, a smile it might be—perhaps it was—and Mary Holbrook believed the blessing she craved was mentally bestowed upon her and her lover.

The physician, noticing the change coming over the sick woman's countenance, stepped to the door and bade the waiting attendants come in. Perceiving that she was making an effort as if to speak, one of the group leaned over the bed, and asked her if she wished to say something about the will. She smiled as if pleased that her desire was understood. Then, turning her face toward the win-



down through which the last rays of the setting sun were dimly flickering, speaking in a low voice, yet distinct and clear, so that, with the silence that the presence of death invokes, to make her words audible and readily understood, she exclaimed, slowly, as though weighing the meaning of each word and syllable, "The—will—is—a—for—ger—y—not—my—s——" The eyes closed, the lips parted, but only to make room for a sweet smile, joined by a soft, mellow light that encircled the brow, lingering there a moment, then it flitted and fluttered as if it were the reflection of the soul struggling to be free, and life and light and sun disappeared together!

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE DECEPTION.

When Charles Manning went out from the scene of death he realized that his first bold deception, extraordinary as it was, had been successful. He at once took possession of Mrs. Winter's farm, and as there were none to deny his claim as the legal heir to the estate, he was secure in its occupancy. To enable him to maintain his deception, he had provided himself with every conceivable weapon. In the keeping of a shrewd, cunning man, he could ask for nothing more than he had at his command. He was in possession of a fund of information that would enable him to meet and repel any suspicion that Mary Holbrook or any of her neighbors might entertain as to his identity.

He started out with the knowledge that through deception he possessed Mary Holbrook's love—love that was as pure and guileless as innocence itself. While it was really love for another, it rested with him to be able to so personate that other throughout the twelve months custom had fixed should elapse between a death in the family and a marriage, as to never give cause for the shadow of suspicion of the deception.

Charles Manning had made himself believe he was not committing a crime in the desperate game he was playing. He did not even think it a game. He had

imbued his conscience with such plausible arguments, in defense of his intentions, that it became seared and callous as far as any susceptibility to a moral impression was concerned, and he had only to consult with that inward monitor to find a counselor that would second any scheme he might undertake.

His soliloquies were ingenious, and to his conscience they were convincing. If Mary Holbrook believed he was her lover, if heaven had fashioned two men so much alike that a maiden of ordinary intelligence, who had given her heart to one, after years of intimacy and devotion, should continue that love to the other, and, after a long period of similar intimacy with that other, fail to detect a shadow of deception, he could not see wherein any wrong existed. He had so perverted his conscience that it concealed from him the evil which was in his heart when Henry Winters first told the story of his love for Mary Holbrook; that it concealed from him the evil that was intensified and developed into an unpardonable crime when he gave the draught to his companion with the intention of preventing him from again enjoying Mary Holbrook's love; that it concealed from him the infamy which made up the desperate scheme he had planned to secure the love of one that believed she was loving another.

Charles Manning may have conscientiously believed if Mary Holbrook never learned of the deception practiced upon her there was no wrong done. This thing of conscience either takes to curious fits and startling turns, at times, or else some other force crowds it out of its place. Charles Manning had

made himself believe that his conscience approved of every scheme he devised to cheat and deceive Mary Holbrook. Yet there must have been times in his career when his conscience, notwithstanding the surroundings, told him that he was a criminal of the deepest dye.

Charles Manning spent the most of his time in the company of Mary Holbrook. The two farms were managed by hired help, which gave the owners plenty of time for reading together, strolling in the woods and fields, rowing on the lake, and love making.

Not wishing to be idle, and learning of the contemplated resignation of the telegraph operator at the station, Charles made application for the place. The company, upon being satisfied of his efficiency, was glad to accept the services of so popular and intelligent a young man as Henry Winters—for by that name he must now be known—had proven himself to be. As the duties only required a portion of his time he was enabled without neglecting anything expected of him, to give the two farms his general attention.

Mary Holbrook had no cause to find fault with the fervency and ardor of the love which Henry Winters embraced every opportunity to convince her he possessed for her. He was in fact the most devoted of wooers. She failed to see that his rough experience and strange adventures among the people of that hidden continent had lessened his admiration for her, or had benumbed his feelings toward her, or had made him any less the ardent lover. It might be, she thought at times that he was not so enraptured with



her personal charms as before that strange sea voyage, or at least he was not as loud and earnest in his expressions of love as on the night when he bade her what proved to be a long, long adieu. Still she experienced the perfection of bliss in listening to the oft-repeated stories of his sufferings on the wreck at sea, and the dangers he encountered in his travels among the people of that strange land. He knew just how much color to give to his adventures to interest and fascinate his fair listener, and she in turn would hang on his lips, breathless and silent, as if the magic spell would be broken were she to utter a single word. She never tired of being an enthusiastic listener. Often she would beg him to tell the story over again that she might pity him while at least he was telling it. Thus he wove around his victim a net with strands of steel, and if she ever breaks through them and becomes free, heaven and angels must help her do it.

Young Winters labored to make himself popular with the farmers far and near. He made them frequent visits, happening in on them at meal times, or belated, staying with them over night. His hobby was the tariff, and nothing pleased him so much as to sit around the cheerful fire of a winter's evening and discuss that subject. He had a familiar way of getting at the tax on the things the farmers bought. He would ask his listeners to name an article in sight that the farmer did not pay a tax on. From the family Bible on the center table down to the primer the creeping babe was busily tearing in pieces, a tax was levied on. The salt and the salt cellar, the

knife and fork, the spoons, the crockery, the table cloth, the rug before the fire and the carpet on the floor, the chairs and the cradle, the lumber the house was built of, the nails, the paint, the doors, the locks and the keys, the sugar and the sugar bowl, the tin pans, the stoves, the blankets on the beds, the bedsteads and every article of clothing on both male and female, yea, nearly everything the farmer did not raise, but which he bought, was taxed from twenty to eighty-five per cent. Go out doors, the same endless system of taxation is visible. There was not a tool or a farming implement, from the hoe leaning against the garden fence to the threshing machine in the yard, but was taxed, and a tax that on three articles out of four was forced out of the farmer's pocket, not to help pay the expenses of running the government, but to be put into another man's purse, that he might carry on a business which he claimed would not be profitable without this contribution from the farmers.

He loved to talk with the people about his travels and adventures and was constantly introducing subjects that would afford him an opportunity to show them how familiar he was with their habits, and little incidents in their lives, which had been forgotten save as he revived the recollection of them. He delighted in these reminiscences and in refreshing the memories of the neighbors, so that had there been in all that region any one who suspected he was not Henry Winters, whole communities would have risen up to prove his identity.

No wonder poor Mary Holbrook was completely

blinded. It was an unequal contest from the beginning. The praise of her lover was on every lip. That kind of praise which so often makes maidens love, even against their will—makes them love when they should hate. There were times, though, when a mysterious something would be tugging at her heart-strings, as if to warn her of danger. But she was too devoted to her lover to heed the warning. Often she would fancy there were voices whispering something about lovers that were false, and lovers made mad by love, but she never thought the voices were for her to heed.

“Henry,” she said one evening, when passing the little churchyard, and noticing the shadow of the frail steeple lengthening out clear to the graves of the loved ones, “I see the grass is growing in that little path to your mother’s grave. It certainly can not be that the memory of your sainted mother is being forgotten, and that you have any less tears to shed now over her grave than when she was first laid there.”

Mary did not utter this mild rebuke because she doubted Henry’s reverence for his mother’s memory, and yet so sudden was the question asked, and so unexpected, that it startled him into a fright, and in spite of his great will power, he turned pale, and beads of sweat trickled down his face. Mary noticed his excited condition and attributed it to his feelings, which she had unintentionally wounded by the cruel insinuation. Before he could regain his composure sufficiently to reply, Mary, in a tender and sympathetic manner, apologized for her thoughtlessness, and when her great black eyes met his, she implored his forgiveness.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### IN AN UNKNOWN LAND.

Henry Winters, though alone and in an unknown land, was not the lad to give up in despair. Manly courage was one of his marked characteristics. Through all the hardships of the shipwreck and amid all the perils encountered since reaching the shore, he had borne himself as a true hero. Alone now, left alone by those who thought him dead, and knowing his death would be reported to his mother and to Mary Holbrook, he grieved only for them. He felt they would be mourning his death, and he pitied them. For himself, now that he was restored to health, he no longer had a thought or a wish. Twelve months would soon roll around, and the ship would come again and he would be homeward bound. His heart leaped with joy at the thought of the surprise in store for those loved ones who for a full year would mourn his death.

But how should he occupy his time during the months of waiting? He was in nowise inclined to seek pleasure in the lives the natives lived, nor did the dusky maiden, who had rescued him from the grave, have any charms for him. He was grateful for the inestimable service she had done him, but the debt ended with his gratitude. He had only the love of a son for his mother, and the love of a lover for Mary Holbrook.



He soon learned what he might well have feared, that his life was still in danger. One day there came from beyond the mountains the proud chieftain of a mighty people. The great physician's daughter was that chieftain's promised wife. But when he sought her hand and asked her to redeem her pledge by wedding him, she hesitated. The chieftain at once connected Henry with the refusal of his affianced to wed him. Though wrongfully accused, the penalty was the same. He was in the way. He must be removed. But mortals can not go so far from the eye of omnipotence but they may be made to feel that even a great chieftain may propose while God disposes.

One night, soon after the arrival of this chieftain, two natives entered the apartment in which Henry was sleeping, and bade him rise and follow them. It was instinct to obey. Out into the wilderness they went, and, before they saw the morning's sun, they had left many leagues between them and the chieftain's decree.

The following day they reached the banks of a river, and at once proceeded to construct a raft for a voyage down the stream. With an axe and saw they felled several trees, and with long roots pulled from the ground, which answered for ropes, and with the bark stripped from the trees, they soon had the material for a float, and by another day they were ready to embark. The stream abounded in fish, and birds fairly filled the air. Delicious eggs lined the river banks, and the bread-bush was laden with a substance very much resembling finely ground flour. In fact, the adventurers lived on the fat of the land.

The current of the river ran quite swiftly, perhaps five miles an hour. The stream was on an average a full mile in width, and it kept close to high cliffs on one side, while on the other was a vast expanse of tableland several feet above the surface of the water and stretching out to the very horizon with not a tree or bush or rock in sight. This boundless area of land may at one time have been the bed of the river, or perhaps the seat of an empire, and the ages may have laid waste its cities and covered the ruins with imperishable dust.

For more than a thousand miles did these wanderers drift on the bosom of that beautiful stream without seeing a human face or a human habitation. This monotony was not to continue always, for one afternoon they discovered a large boat tied to a stake driven on the bank of the river, and hardly had they gotten over their surprise at this discovery, when a dozen savages plunged into the water and swam rapidly toward the raft; knowing the rude structure would sink should the savages seek to climb aboard, it was headed toward the shore to await their coming. The meeting instead of being unfriendly was quite cordial and it was not long before all were on friendly terms. Much to Henry's astonishment he learned that while the new comers appeared to be savages, they were quite civilized and were savage only in lack of dress and the surplus of glittering ornaments which covered their limbs.

A rest of a day or two and Henry and his two trusty friends resumed their journey. Ruins and desolate and abandoned villages, which had been

plainly visible for hundreds of miles, gave way to new buildings and new improvements, denoting the approach of a modern civilization. Amid the ruins of ancient palaces and grand cathedrals were palaces and cathedrals of modern architecture, in strange contrast with the decay from which they seemed to have arisen.

The appearance of the country indicated that a new race had come to reclaim the land and restore the order of things before the decay. These improvements became more marked and more modern as the adventurers approached the sea.

Before another moon they found themselves in the midst of an advanced civilization. Agriculture and manufactures were prospering together, and were moving hand in hand with mining and mechanic arts. The farms were well cultivated and the tillers of the soil were satisfied and prosperous. Their improvements were substantial and commodious. They worked ten or eight hours a day just as they chose. Their wives and children were happy and healthy. Their crops were bountiful, and for the surplus they found a ready market at a fair profit. Countless industries were in operation the year round and employes seldom complained of the wages paid them. As a general thing they owned their homes and were out of debt or possessed the means to place themselves out of debt. Holidays were numerous and strikes were unknown. Everybody, save the drones, the criminals and the indolent, were prospering. Everything of merit was flourishing. The very rich and the very poor, were few in number.

The middle-class predominated and controlled the government. One word expressed it all. That was contentment.

Henry visited several cities and mingled with the people. The same thrifty condition prevailed in them all. He was constantly impressed with the fact that the multitude were busy. No complaining of hard times. No fears of a financial crisis. Fraudulent assignment for the benefit of preferred creditors was almost unheard of. But few mortgages to foreclose. No receivers appointed to manage bankrupt corporations. Just enough poor-houses and paupers and jails to show that human nature was the same the world over.

Each person pursued his line of business with a certainty of receiving fair and just compensation for the work done, with the assurance that his earnings would go into his own pockets and not be used by the government to protect infant industries.

The exchange of products between the several countries, was conducted on an extensive scale. The breadstuff, meats, oil, fruit, clothing and coal of one nation found a ready market in another, and was exchanged for gold, silver, silks, wool, iron and iron ore, cotton, sugar, and various kinds of raw material. The revenues of the governments were derived from a tax on imports, and this tax was fixed each year by a board of revenue adjusters. There was no surplus stored away in the vaults of the treasury, to make men dishonest, and only enough tax was gathered to pay current expenses. Such a tariff was popular with the masses, and while there was



occasionally a manufacturer who thought he could pay his employes better wages were he protected against the cheaper labor of some of the other countries he had to compete with, yet when he considered that the theory of protection, if generally adopted, would so affect his interests in other directions, that wages would be lower and his profits smaller, he would not insist on being protected. He prospered without protection, and his employés prospered with him.

The tax or tariff laws were the simplest part of the machinery of the government. Nothing was covered up, or concealed from the tax-payer. If he bought a coat made outside the realm, he knew that a certain part of the purchase price, and just how much, was tariff, and how much was for the coat, and he knew that the tariff he paid went into the people's treasury, instead of into the pockets of his neighbor, to recompense him for a fancied loss he might sustain by carrying on his business. Each tub stood on its own bottom. There was no favoritism, no class legislation, no special privileges; but equal and exact justice for all.

Henry was puzzled over what caused the decay and desolation in the vast country through which he had journeyed, and what condition of things led civilization to re-occupy ruins that might become ruins again under like circumstances. By the aid of his companions, who could talk the language, though in a broken manner, he learned from the wise men that the country, for thousands of miles, had once been the richest food-producing soil known to mankind; that

for hundreds of years it was cultivated by serfs, who, in time, earned their freedom, became owners of the lands, and were admitted to equal citizenship with their former employers; that the surplus grain and meat were transported to distant countries and sold at a fair profit; that, generally, the expenses of the government were met by a tax on the articles brought from foreign lands; that capital engaged in manufacturing industries was protected against outside competition which employed cheap labor, that the operatives might receive liberal wages; that this tax operated most unjustly on the farmer, by cutting off his foreign market, because the tariff prevented his exchanging the products of the farm for the products of the foreign loom and workshops; that the farmer was compelled to compete with the cheap labor of other countries, which the manufacturer was protected against, and forced to buy the necessaries of life where they commanded the highest price.

The young men left the farm and went into business in the city. The price obtained for farm produce fell below the cost of production. The farm was mortgaged to raise money for living expenses. Needed improvements were neglected because of the lack of means to make them. The farm-house and out-buildings commenced to decay.

It did not require much longer than a century of such a system of raising revenue and protecting capital, to drive the farmer from the farm, lay waste his improvements, and make his land a desolation, with penury, want and starvation going along with him. Then the rich man's mansion went to decay; the

palace of royalty crumbled to dust; temples, cathedrals, fortifications, public buildings, became piles of ruins, and for a thousand years that vast empire knew not the footstep of a human being, save when savage hordes, pursued by other bands of barbarians, took refuge there. Some of those savans insist that the vast empire was made desolate because the Almighty would not permit a race of people to enjoy His bounty whose law-givers did such a wicked and unjust thing as to force one man to contribute a portion of his earnings for another man's benefit.

When the desolation was complete and every vestige of man's injustice to man had been buried beyond resurrection, there came a race of men from the far east and took up their abode amid that desolation. The natural harbors along the sea coast first attracted attention. Then the rich soil which explorations convinced them existed for more than two thousand miles inland, so impressed them with the vast wealth which lay beneath the sod, that they founded a colony which developed into the empire, now the pride of the east.

The thrift and industry of the people may be traced direct to a system of government which considers one man just as good as another and no better. The laws oppress no one. They bear equally on all. The burdens which a people must shoulder when they come out from the darkness of barbarism into the glare of civilization, fall on all alike.

Thus discoursed the wise men of that strange land.

When his curiosity had been sufficiently satisfied,

Henry embarked on a sailing vessel destined for a distant port, where, after being detained a few weeks, he took passage on a ship bound for Glasgow, Scotland. This was a long voyage and made longer by the ship making several stops to take on merchandise and passengers. At one of the ports several Americans came on board whose presence served to shorten and enliven what was promising to be a long, tedious and monotonous journey. Landing in due time at Glasgow, the American passengers went by rail, at once, to Liverpool and thence by the steamer, City of Rome, to New York.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE WILL IN COURT.

Court in a country town differs in many respects from court in a large city. Three terms a year give just enough novelty to court proceedings to make the people look forward with much interest to the day when court will convene. But now unusual excitement prevails over a case of more than ordinary importance. The day is fixed for the cause to be heard. At an early hour the multitude gather at the county seat, from all portions of the county. It does not take long to fill the court-house to overflowing with an eager, anxious, earnest crowd of men and women, most of whom are farmers, their wives and grown-up sons and daughters. They mingle together in groups and discuss the merits of the case to be tried. It is evident that the sympathy is one-sided and that the mass of spectators are of one mind, perhaps for the reason that it is human nature to take sides with the cause of the weak, the helpless and the presumably innocent.

What is known far and near as the great will case of Silas Groundwig *vs.* the Estate of Stephen Holbrook is set for hearing. Distinguished lawyers from the city have been employed by each side. The judge takes his place on the bench, the clerk slips into his chair in front of the judge's desk, the persons summoned to serve as jurors are called, and the

long and tedious labor of securing a jury who knows little or nothing about the case is at last completed, the jurors are sworn to render a true verdict, according to the law and the evidence given them in court, and the case is ready for the first witness.

By the time this interesting point has been reached, the day is spent. The lawyers have exhausted themselves in their efforts to preserve and promote the legal rights of their clients. The men presented for jurymen have been catechised as to their knowledge of the case, and as to the extent of their bias, if any, for or against either party. It has been quite difficult to obtain a jury composed entirely of citizens who have not formed an opinion as to the validity of the will, nor heard the merits of the case discussed. The jury, as finally selected, are mostly farmers, men of intelligence, possessing an ordinary amount of good sense, and who are known to be fair-minded and honest. The populace have confidence in the jury, and believe that justice will be done, and their idea of justice in this case is a verdict in accordance with the drift of public sentiment.

Upon the adjournment of court the people return to their homes, coming again early in the morning, eager for the case to begin and end. The case has been commenced by Mr. Silas Groundwig, the person named in the will as principal legatee, to recover from Mary Holbrook, the daughter of the person making the will, the rents and profits coming into her possession by reason of her claiming to be the sole heir at law of her father's estate, there being no will in

existence, as Miss Holbrook had every reason to believe.

The attorney for the plaintiff Groundwig, opened the case to the court and jury in an off-hand, careless, conversational style, as though the fact of the will giving his client the greater part of Major Holbrook's fortune was a matter of very little concern to any one except Mr. Groundwig, and while, under the circumstances, there might be some of the gentlemen of the jury who would sympathize with Miss Holbrook, and deeply regret that her honored and respected father had not deemed it advisable to leave all his wealth to her, yet, on the other hand, those same jurors must not forget that it was truly a heroic act—noble and self-sacrificing and worthy a brave and gallant soldier, to be so just and so generous as to remember in his will, in such a liberal manner, a comrade who had faced death to save the testator's life. Undoubtedly the Major had his own notions about bestowing his fortune upon a young girl, even though that girl was the fruit of his own loins, and no doubt, as he had averred in his will, it were better that she should learn to earn her own living and thus be able the better to enjoy such comforts and pleasures as she should secure by her own efforts. Mary Holbrook had not been left penniless. Far from it. A home with neat and rare furnishings was hers to enjoy and hers to dispose of as she might desire. Silas Groundwig had led a checkered life. Wounded on the battle-field, denied a pension because he was unable to procure evidence that his disability was caused while engaged in the military service, he

had continued to struggle on bravely and manfully against the vicissitudes of ill fortune, until, in a providential manner, he was directed to the home of his old army comrade, whom he found an invalid, and by whose side he remained, ministering to his wants, until the eyes of the noble-hearted Major were closed in death.

“I now offer in evidence,” continued the attorney, “of the validity of Mr. Groundwig’s claim to the late Major Holbrook’s estate, the will signed by Stephen Holbrook in the presence of two witnesses, who signed their names as such witnesses in the testator’s presence and at his request, in accordance with the requirement of law. As you will see, the will has been properly probated, has the seal of the clerk of the probate court affixed thereto, and his certificate attached, to the effect that the attesting witnesses, James Martin and Matilda Winters appeared before him, legal notice having been given of the time of proving said will, and made oath that they did so sign said will as such witnesses.”

The attorney took his seat, apparently quite exhausted with the effort he had made. He wiped the perspiration from his brow, and looked around to see what effect his opening of the case had upon the audience. The lawyers who appeared for Miss Holbrook consulted together for several minutes. The spectators looked dumbfounded. Though for months they had known all these things, though they knew such a will was claimed to exist, and that it appeared to be witnessed by Mrs. Winters, yet for the



first time they began to realize what it all meant, and what the possible consequences might be, and how much pretty Mary Holbrook, who, white as a sheet, sat by the side of her lawyers and her lover, had at stake in the legal battle now fairly under way.

The elder and most scholarly-appearing attorney for Miss Holbrook, the defendant, slowly rises to his feet and addresses the court. Perfect stillness reigns throughout the room. The lawyer, in a low but quite musical voice, without any desire to engage the attention of any one except the court and jury, remarks that the case is a most singular one, and will be found full of startling incidents. He is ready to admit that the plaintiff, Mr. Groundwig, has been quite lucky to be remembered so generously by Major Holbrook, but he thinks before the case shall end Mr. Groundwig will learn, and so will the public at large, that Major Holbrook was not the ungrateful parent the making of such a will would prove him to be. While there are many mysterious, strange and thrilling events connected with the alleged execution of this will, he expects to prove to the entire satisfaction of court and jury, that they are part and parcel of a deep and atrocious plot—yea, a foul and fiendish conspiracy—to cheat, defraud and swindle the young, bright and vivacious Mary Holbrook out of the fortune left by her father, and designed for his child and for her only, upon the event of his death. Major Holbrook loved his daughter as he loved his life. Her mother dying when Mary was a mere child, the father had become passionately devoted to her welfare and happiness, and he had been heard to say a

hundred times that the only pleasure he had in making money was that his daughter might enjoy it, and he might feel that when the time came that he could no longer care for her she would in nowise be dependent on her own labor for means of support. After the war, Major Holbrook came west and brought with him the savings a generous country had dealt out to him for services rendered, and while he cultivated the soil and gathered his harvests, he was fortunate in his investments and successful in certain speculations, so that before he reached middle age he had accumulated a large fortune. Major Holbrook died. A motherless child was his only heir. There was no other living relative to claim the smallest share of the estate. Stephen Holbrook LEFT NO WILL.

“If the court please, and gentlemen of the jury,” proceeded the lawyer, “I repeat it, and am ready to repeat it again and again, Major Holbrook LEFT NO WILL. He had frequently discussed the subject with his lawyer, and, upon being informed that his daughter would inherit, under the law, all his possessions, the same as she might under his will, he concluded a will was not necessary. The document, if the court please, and gentlemen of the jury, now submitted to this honorable court, and claimed by Groundwig to be the last will and testament of Major Holbrook, is a base and wicked forgery. The plot is a deeply laid one. The conspirators have done their work well. With the most consummate skill, with ingenuity worthy the best brain of the land, with the most wonderful ability to conceal facts and events, the plotters have so completely drafted, perfected and executed this document, that

not until the attorneys were far along in this investigation did they become satisfied that the document was a forgery. Not only is the late Major Holbrook's property at stake, but his reputation for integrity, for truth and for honor, are in the scales. For him to disown the child he loved and adored, and to bequeath to her only a small homestead and the few things belonging to it, and give to an old army comrade, if old army comrade he was, because he had simply performed an act that all brave soldiers claim the right to perform without the hope or expectation of compensation, the great bulk of his large estate, was an act that would stamp Major Holbrook as a villain whose memory deserved universal execration. Major Holbrook was no villain. The evidence will prove he was an honest man."

While by no means intended, yet Lawyer Hale's remarks produced a profound sensation throughout the court-room, and for a moment or two a buzz went round the audience as though every one was expressing an opinion upon its merits.

"The document offered in evidence," said the court, "as the last will and testament of Major Holbrook, seems to have been properly proven, and is in conformity with the statutes of the State in such case made and provided. Before proceeding with the testimony, the court will pass upon the motion to exclude this document because it has been prepared by a typewriting machine and hence is not a compliance with the law which provides that wills 'must be in writing.' The court is clearly of the opinion that to all intents and purposes the will is 'in writing.' The motion is overruled."

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE EVIDENCE AND THE JUDGE'S ADVICE TO THE FARMERS.

Exceptions were taken to the ruling, and Mr. Hale called William Bush as the first witness. Mr. Bush was sworn, and took a seat in the witness box, and responding to the usual questions answered that he was forty-two years of age and had resided in the county fifteen years.

*Ques.* Did you ever know James Martin whose name is signed to this alleged will?

*Ans.* I did.

*Ques.* How long did you know him?

*Ans.* Only a few days.

*Ques.* Were you intimate with him?

*Ans.* Quite so, for the short time I knew him.

*Ques.* Where is he now?

*Ans.* Dead.

*Ques.* When did he die?

*Ans.* August 14, 1882.

Quick as thought, and entirely out of order, and for the first time approaching anything of the sensational, Mr. Hale sprang to his feet and fairly screamed: "Gentlemen of the jury, that will is dated October 15th, 1882, two full months after James Martin died!"

Upon this startling declaration, confusion took possession of the audience and the jury, and did not



miss the judge. It was an exciting scene, in which everybody took part. The bailiff rapped on his desk and commanded silence, and when order was restored, Mr. Hale announced, with an air of victory, to the opposite counsel, that they might take the witness.

*Ques.* By Mr. Newcomb, one of the attorneys for Groundwig. Mr. Bush, how do you fix the date of Mr. Martin's death as having occurred at the time you state?

*Ans.* I keep a diary and find it so recorded there. My diary never lies. Besides, Martin was boarding with me and in my employ, and the diary shows the day he came as well as the day he died.

*Ques.* Was he a stranger in your neighborhood?

*Ans.* He was.

*Ques.* How long had he boarded and worked for you?

*Ans.* Ten days.

*Ques.* May you not, Mr. Bush, unintentionally and innocently, have made a wrong entry in your diary as to time?

*Ans.* I told you, sir, my diary never lies. James Martin died on August 14, 1882. I saw him in his coffin. I saw him in his grave.

*Mr. Hale.* That is all. You can step aside.

"The Rev. John Norton may be sworn," said Mr. Hale.

*Ques.* Are you the pastor of the First Lutheran Church, of Bradford?

*Ans.* I am.

*Ques.* What was the date of the organization of that society?

*Ans.* January 10, 1883.

*Ques.* Was there any such society in existence on the 15th day of October, the date of the alleged will?

*Ans.* There was not.

As the will bequeathed three thousand dollars to the First Lutheran Church of Bradford, and as there was no such society in existence at the date of the will, the inference would seem to be that the will must have been framed after the society was organized, which was after Major Holbrook's death.

The witness was not cross-examined.

"If the court please," said Mr. Hale, "we now introduce a certified copy of the letters patent issued for an improved method of forming the letters used by the type-writer. This certificate is signed by the commissioner of patents, and has attached the patent office seal."

The plaintiff's attorneys object to the introduction of the certificate, for the reason that the commissioner of patents should be brought into court, where he could be cross-examined. The court ruled that the certificate was the best possible evidence to prove when the patent was issued, and the nature of the improvement patented.

"It will be seen by this certificate," continued Mr. Hale, "that the patent was issued eight months after the alleged will was type-written, and that the improvement patented was the style of letter used in copying the will."

The counsel for Groundwig looked upon this evidence as quite damaging to their case. The certifi-

cate may have been a surprise to them, or it may not. Their client was in no wise disturbed, and this fact gave the counsel some encouragement. Groundwig was certainly being pushed to the wall, and though a man of almost infinite resources, they were rapidly being exhausted.

“I now propose,” said Mr. Hale, “if your honor please, to offer in evidence the dying declarations of Matilda Winters. I hold in my hand the depositions of four reputable persons who were present, and heard all she said in her dying hour.”

This proposition was strenuously opposed by Mr. Groundwig's lawyers, and the motion was argued at length by the attorneys on both sides. The point made in opposition to admitting the declarations, was that on her death-bed her mind wandered and she was out of her head, imagining she saw a great, white light which she fancied represented the coming of those better times which the farmers in her neighborhood had long looked for and had long been promised, and this white light she characterized as the success of tariff reform. With her mind in this condition, and when she was unable to understand the meaning of questions put to her, and when she was running on at random, using meaningless phrases, she was asked what about the will. Without comprehending the full meaning of the question or the bearing her answer might have on the rights of Mr. Groundwig, she replied—what no doubt in her lucid hours she had made herself believe was true—“it is a forgery.”

The counsel contended that her declarations were

simply the ravings of a person in delirium; that she was wild and flighty, seeing things wholly imaginary and entirely unnatural. She was in such a state of mental weakness that what she said ought not to weigh a feather in determining the equities in this case; that the woman was a fanatic upon the subject of tariff reform, and possessing but the one idea, she had harped upon it until her mind was so warped that before she was confined to her bed in her last illness, she would not have been a good witness in open court, even under oath. To admit as evidence, for this jury to consider, declarations of that woman when in such a delirious condition that she did not recognize her own son who had been absent only about two years, was giving so wide a scope to the law governing the admission of death-bed declarations, as to make the rule a farce.

The judge, in deciding the motion, remarked that he had been acquainted with Matilda Winters for a number of years; that he knew her to be a woman of superior intelligence, highly educated, and possessed of a large fund of good common sense. She had given the tariff question a great deal of study and research, and her views upon the subject had the merit of being sensible ones, and she embraced every opportunity to discuss the subject with the farmers, and impress upon their minds the fact that they were being robbed of their hard earnings by the unfair system of government taxation. In these opinions she was sincere and aggressive.

“I am not ashamed to admit,” continued the judge, “that her arguments were what first led me



to the conviction that the present tariff is unjust, unfair and unequal in its operation; and that it has selected the farmer from all the other industries of the land as the especial object of its oppression and injustice. Why the farmers do not heed such teachings, is beyond my comprehension. During the twenty years I have been on the bench I have associated almost entirely with farmers. I know something of their struggles, their sacrifices, their toils and their earnings. I have seen the raw prairies of this entire section of the State converted into cultivated farms by the brawny arms and copious sweat-drops of the sturdy farmer. I have seen the farmer, as a class, realize less from his investment and his labor than was absolutely necessary to support, in a comfortable manner, himself and family. I have seen the price of his produce reduced from year to year, until it is questionable whether his land might not better lay idle than be exhausted in growing crops. I have seen the insidious mortgage worm itself almost imperceptibly into the homestead, and year after year demand, in the way of interest, a large share of the farmer's net earnings. I have seen the wife and little ones deprived the comforts of life, that there should be no default in the payment of that interest. I have seen the interest-account grow bigger and bigger year by year, by reason of low prices for farm produce, or high prices for raiment and such necessities of life as were not produced on the farm, until the amount of the mortgage was increased from time to time to save the farm from being sold at sheriff's sale.

“I have given the cause of all these conditions the most careful and the most searching study, and I say now to the jurors who are hearing this case—all of whom, with one or two exceptions, are farmers—and to this court-room full of spectators—most of whom earn their bread by holding the plow—that I can trace the cause of the farmer’s adversity and his ill fortune, the cause of his debts, the cause of the mortgage on the farm, the cause of low prices for his produce, and its low purchasing power the cause of his sons leaving home and living in the cities and towns, the cause of the hollow cheeks, thin lips and pale face of the wife of his youth, the cause of so faint a prospect in the future for a better condition of all these things, seven times out of nine, directly to the operation of the tariff laws of this country.”

The judge had grown quite eloquent as he proceeded with his remarks. The court-room was so silent and quiet that only the breathing of the audience broke the stillness. Every eye was turned upon the speaker. Even the lawyers were eager listeners, and some of them were getting information of the gravest importance from an oracle that had proven its right to speak from authority.

But the judge had not finished: “Let me say to the farmers who hear me, and I wish I could be heard by every farmer in the district, that this is not a party question. When you are being robbed of not only your earnings, but your farms, it is not the part of wisdom or good sense or justice to your families, to say that if you resist the robbers and disarm them, you weaken your party! What does party care

for you when it grinds you to the earth and takes from you, in the name of law, the fruits of your labor? I am astonished every day of my life that the farmers do not see the iniquity of this tax, which, in law, is called a tariff, and unite as one man to reduce it to such a basis that only enough money shall be derived from it, in connection with the internal revenue, to pay the expenses of the government. For the law to lay its strong arm on you and take from you, or from anybody else, a dollar more than such expenses, no matter what the pretext may be, is robbery, pure and simple. Doing it in the name of law does not make it any the less robbery.

“ I do not hold a term of court, and I am hearing cases at least nine months in the year, but decrees are entered on my docket for the foreclosure of mortgages on forty or fifty farms, not one out of ten of which in my opinion would have been sold by the sheriff, were it not for the high protective tariff—were it not for the farmer being compelled to take a part of his earnings out of his pocket and put them in the pocket of some person who had no moral right to them.

“ Almost invariably these farms are owned by hard-working, industrious men, who have toiled from early manhood to middle-age, perseveringly and persistently to make a home for themselves in their declining years, and to help the boys start farms of their own, only in the end to run against a foreclosure of mortgage, a sale by the sheriff, and when most entitled to rest and a home, earned over and over again, compelled to go further west and start life anew.

“Do you farmers receive any protection from the tariff? It is simply impossible that you should, because the foreigner does not come here and sell his wheat, corn, pork and cattle, in competition with you and you are told that the tariff on manufactured goods is for the express purpose of preventing the foreigner from coming to this country and selling his goods, because were it not for the tariff he could sell them to you cheaper than the home manufacturer can. Thus you are bled at every turn you make and in every vein and every artery. You have to compete with all the world in selling your produce, and then you are not only prohibited from going where you can buy the necessaries of life the cheapest, but you are compelled to pay a tax on nearly every article you do buy, and the greater part of that tax goes to protect some capitalist who makes the government believe he could not prosper in his business unless you donated some of your earnings to him. The worst of it is the farmers seem to like it. At any rate you look on quite unconcernedly and refuse to protest against such injustice, because to do so might hurt your party.

“Go home farmers, and ask your wives and children if they would not prefer more of the necessaries and luxuries and comforts of life than the success of your party? Ask them if they can discover anything to rejoice over in the ‘hip, hip, hurrah’ of a successful party, when they know such cheers are the forerunners of the dismal shout of ‘going, going, gone’ of the county sheriff?

“Upon this all-absorbing subject of tariff reform



Matilda Winters may have been an enthusiast. She was not a fanatic. In her life she spoke the words of wisdom, and dying she spoke the words of prophecy. I do not understand it was a vision Mrs. Winters saw on her death-bed. She was not relating to the sobbing mourners an idle dream; nor was she delirious; nor was she insensible to everything that was going on around her. I am impressed with the idea that in those dying moments there was clearly revealed to her a picture of the farmer's condition when tariff reform shall have done its glorious work. Knowing her end was near, she summed up and graphically described the scenes she believed would follow the resurrection of that crowning principle of free government, that one man should not be taxed for another man's benefit.

“The second point made by counsel for Groundwig is that Mrs. Winters could not have been in her right mind at the moment she declared the will a forgery, because she at once added, ‘not my s—,’ meaning ‘not my signature’ or ‘not my son.’ She could have meant either. If she meant it was not her signature, it is claimed, she could not have been in her right mind, because it is in evidence that she had frequently declared it was her signature, and in fact the counsel for Miss Holbrook admit it is her signature. So she must have referred to the young man who had suddenly appeared upon the scene and addressed the dying woman as mother. It is in evidence that she had grasped his hand in tender and motherly recognition, but when uttering her dying words she unloosed her hold and turned her eyes

from him saying, 'not my s—,' meaning 'he is not my son.' It is claimed the woman could not have been conscious and in her right mind if unable to recognize her son, who had been spirited away under the most mysterious circumstances, and who had just returned after an absence of only about two years. It is contended that failure to recognize her son, or rather the declaration that he was not her son, is conclusive evidence that her mind was not in that state of positive clearness that would justify the court in ruling that her declaration as to the will being 'a forgery,' made in the same breath, was permissible as evidence.

"The court admits, with counsel, that the point made has an important bearing on the admissibility of her dying declaration touching the will, because if her inability to recognize her son came from loss of memory, and consequent loss of mental power, then her statement that the will is a forgery must have been made under a similar condition of mind, and hence would not be admissible.

"It must be remembered that her son had hurried into her presence from a long journey by sea and land that he might be permitted to gaze upon his mother's face for one moment before the vital spark had fled. His clothes were dusty, his face unshaven, his hair disheveled; he had been shipwrecked in mid-ocean, exposed for months, on water and on shore, to the hot rays of a tropical sun and the burning breezes of tropical winds. Others shrank back at his coming, and for several moments those who had known him well failed to recognize him. His

mother, who had been advised of his coming, expected to see the boy as he was when she saw him last, in the flush of health, fair-faced and comely, his personal appearance unchanged; and so painfully disappointed was the poor woman at the change exposure had wrought that she naturally gave utterance to the belief that it was not her son.

“In that declaration there was a use of memory which is the best evidence of a sound mind. She could not so quickly compare the appearance of the young man at her bedside with the boy stolen from his home some two years before without the exercise of her mental faculties. Under such circumstances, the fact that she did not recognize her son is, in the opinion of the court, better evidence of the unimpaired condition of her mind than if she had recognized him. The court would sooner believe the impossible alternative that it was not her son than to think that the failure to recognize him was evidence that her mind was impaired.

“Whether on her death-bed, weak and emaciated, with failing heart and feeble pulse, with strength enough remaining to tell the friends around her couch of the great blessings enshrined within the tariff reform, and referring to that reform as a great white light whose coming would bring prosperity and happiness to the tillers of the soil and to all the land; or whether in the enjoyment of robust health, telling her neighbors those plain, blunt truths about the curse of the tariff; the court believes she was in her right mind and that the declarations made by her on her death-bed, in regard to the alleged will,

are admissible as evidence and entitled to the same weight by the jury as though she were present and testifying under oath.

“I hold in my hand,” continued the court, “a roll of hermetically sealed manuscript, said to have been written by Mrs. Winters a few hours before her death, and found on her person after her decease; accompanying it is a sealed envelope addressed to the judge of the court of this district. On the outside of the roll are the written words, ‘these seals to be broken and this manuscript to be read in open court on the trial of the will case of Groundwig *vs.* Holbrook.’ I know of no more proper time than now, to open the letter and read its contents:

“TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE OF COURT.

“*My Dear Sir:*—The roll of manuscript is the story of my life, briefly told. It has been prepared at times when failing health admonished me I had not long to live, and it has been completed since my physician has told me I shall not see another sun set. As I can not live to attend the trial of the will case, and as my lips are sealed even were I to attend, I ask in justice to my reputation and my honor that the narrative I have prepared be read in court and admitted as the evidence I could give were I relieved of the binding obligations of the oath I have taken. I swore not to speak while living. I pray God to give me strength to speak while dying.

“MATILDA WINTERS.

“I do not care to hear counsel upon the subject now. The court is aware that many objections could be urged against reading the paper in court, unless, upon examination, it was found to be such a document as was admissible under the rule laid down in relation to dying declarations. The court will read



the manuscript, and decide upon its admissibility at the opening of the morning session."

The judge took the roll to his room. He read it through with absorbing interest, and laid it carefully away. But not carefully enough. For hardly had the learned judge retired for the night when the document was mysteriously conveyed to a newspaper office near by, quickly parceled out in "takes" to a dozen compositors, put into type, and before daylight returned to the receptacle from which it was taken. As will be seen by the reader, Mrs. Winter's statement threw a flood of light on the mysteries which had enshrouded and embittered her life.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE THRILLING STORY TOLD BY MRS. WINTERS.

“To-night, if heaven gives me strength, I propose to prepare a statement of all the incidents and events connecting me in any way with signing the document which purports to be the will of Stephen Holbrook. I know I have not long to live, and I write almost in the presence of my Maker, and I feel that what I say should have the same weight in court that my evidence would have if I were present and sworn to tell only the truth.

“When Major Holbrook was taken sick, his physician thought he could not recover, but by skilled nursing and tender care his life might be prolonged for some weeks. His daughter plead with me to come to her home and assist her in ministering to the wants of the sick man. I felt it my duty to go. Would the rest of my life have been different had I not gone? Heaven only knows.

“I had hardly settled down in my new home when the events happened which I am now about to relate—events which have filled my cup of sorrow to the brim, and events which are hastening me to my grave.

“One morning there was a rap at the door. I opened it, and without an invitation on my part, in walked a strange man, whom I did not remember to have seen before. A coarse, heavy black beard covered

almost his entire face, leaving only his dark eyes in sight. He looked nervously about the room, stroked his beard as if to be sure that it was still there, and whispered:

“ ‘ Susan Groundwig, don't you know me?’ Though only a whisper, it was enough. Human disguises could not change that voice. Involuntarily I started up as if to give an alarm. He caught me by the wrist and exclaimed in a whisper which sounded like a voice from the cave of demons:

“ ‘ Don't scream, or call a servant, or arouse any one about the house. I see you know who I am. But give an alarm, even make a motion to call for help, and I will tell a tale of your dishonor and the birth of an illegitimate son, that will drive you from Major Holbrook's house and make you a hateful hag, now and forever, in the sight of his daughter, and make your son—but don't try to speak. Don't think that people will not believe me. The bad spoken of another always finds listeners and never lacks believers. I have not forgotten to bring the proof. These papers tell it all. You want to say they are forged. But what matters that? They appear all right and that is enough. I shall not use them now. I may later on. What I want now is for you to obtain me a situation as watcher or nurse for Major Holbrook during his sickness. I know you will conceal from everybody my name and my relationship to you. A place in Major Holbrook's employ I must have. That obtained, as it will be, and you prove treacherous to me in the slightest manner, or even intimate a suspicion that I am not what I shall claim to Major

Holbrook to be, I will give your history—yes, this forged history, not only to him, but I will tell it to his daughter and to this entire neighborhood. Do we understand each other?’

“During the time that Silas Groundwig was pouring his cruel words into my ears, I was almost stupefied with terror, and it may be with shame. Shocked beyond words can tell at his wicked and false insinuations, I saw there was but one way now to act, and that was to promise to comply with his request and trust that Providence might rescue me from the terrible spell that man seemed to have over me. I gave the promise. I could not do otherwise. I was at his mercy. Not because I was guilty, but because I was a woman, because I loved my son so passionately and because there was no sacrifice too great for me to make for his happiness and that of Mary Holbrook.

“Silas Groundwig was taken into Major Holbrook’s employ. With all the stains upon his name he had never changed it. I had changed mine. Was I the greater criminal?

“Groundwig at once made himself busy and useful by the bedside of the sick man. He was strong and muscular, and could so easily lift the Major from the bed, and was so ready to anticipate his every want and minister to them, that I was in mortal dread of his planning some great crime, and that the fast failing invalid was to be the victim. I dared not make known my suspicions. To do so would throw me into his clutches, and three hearts might ache and starve for the want of love, and three lives



might be sacrificed. When my fears were the most aroused, just at the time when I had determined to call the village pastor to advise me, Major Holbrook died. He died a natural death. I was so afraid there was a tragedy near at hand. If one was contemplated greater than the terrible crime that was afterward committed, then did a kind Providence stay the hand that would have perpetrated it.

“My friends all know the strange and mysterious events that followed a few weeks after Major Holbrook’s death. They know my boy was stolen from me and sent a long voyage to distant foreign shores, but they know nothing of who did this great crime and the motive for doing it. I will undertake to tell the thrilling story, though I may not live to finish it:

“The funeral ceremony over, Silas Groundwig took his departure without seeking an interview with me. For that kindness I was exceedingly glad. Would he return? Why should he return? Was there anything more he could return for? And yet, why should he not come back and complete the work he had in view. He had evidently been baffled in carrying out the scheme that prompted him to seek employment with Major Holbrook. My womanly fears led me to believe that his work with me was not yet finished. I thought I imagined the worst that could befall me, and yet, of all the cruel things I conjured in my mind that he might attempt, I fell so far short of what did happen that I pictured him a saint while the crime he committed would put to shame the deeds of devils thrice damned.

“The time came for Henry to graduate. Mary, whose eyes were always full of tears, concluded not to attend the commencement exercises. I wonder if she had fears that the essay would not be equal to her anticipations, for I know she expected her lover would earn the highest honors. I went, and if ever mother was proud of her son I was proud of mine. How my heart thrilled with delight and gratification to hear him advocate and defend the principles I had instilled into his youthful mind. His tutors had taught him the art of embellishing and beautifying the homely truths he had learned at the farmer’s hearthstone. His subject was one which was commanding the attention of the nation; and when I heard that great audience of intelligent farmers, who had assembled there from all parts of the State, applaud the sentiments my boy uttered, I thanked heaven I had lived to see the day when the men that tilled the soil showed so much interest in the subject of tariff reform.

“Henry returned home with me. It is a great satisfaction now for me to know that the few weeks he remained with me and Mary were the happiest and gladdest days of all our lives. There was too much of heaven in them to last long. It did not take the destroyer long to break in upon our pleasures and turn all to grief and sadness and tears.

“Silas Groundwig came. I knew he would. I knew too well when my son returned no more to his home that the hand of that monster was again laid upon my heart. From the moment of Henry’s disappearance I connected Groundwig with the cause. So

when the creature came, he came not unexpected. I half welcomed him, because I knew he could give me tidings of my boy. Tidings that the wolf gives of the lamb!

“One day I awoke, horrified at a dreadful dream that was almost too real to be a dream. But my dream was bliss compared to the wakening, for there, seated in a chair by my side was Groundwig. I sat motionless, and even fearless, awaiting the coming of the bolt. It came. Not quick, as from the darkest, blackest, fiercest cloud, but slowly, measuredly, with unerring aim, to torture and to kill. It came from a foul fiend incarnate, and ere it had done its desperate work, the bolt pierced my heart and burned my soul to ashes. Yet, there was enough of life left me to speak. He could tell me of my boy. That knowledge was life.

“‘Silas Groundwig, what have you done with my boy?’

“How I shuddered and trembled at the sound of my voice. What a question to ask such a monster, and yet, only such a monster could answer it. I used no epithet. I did not call upon the God of Justice to strike the creature dead. I made no woman’s plea, no mother’s entreaty, no beseeching prayer, but I sat there like a prisoner in the dock, waiting to know my fate.

“Groundwig had not spoken a word, nor did his pale, ashen lips part even the width of a whisper, but from an inside pocket of his threadbare coat he drew forth a folded sheet of paper, and, handing it to me, motioned me to read it. How I composed myself

sufficiently to unfold that sheet, and how I found strength to read it, I never could understand. It is all a blank now. I know I read the letter. I have it before me:

“MY DEAR MOTHER: I am a prisoner in a cave. I am tortured almost to the death. My jailers are desperate and ——[Here a word is obliterated]. My tormentors threaten to kill me by inches. I have been permitted to write one letter giving you the particulars of my being kidnaped, but I fear it never reached you. I feel I am held here for a ransom. I am permitted to send you these few words, and no more. My God, must I die here ?

“Your affectionate son,

“HENRY WINTERS.

“I must have fainted with the reading of the letter, because when consciousness returned I found myself lying on the lounge and Groundwig bathing my temples with cold water. Heaven permitted him to do that act, and heaven compelled me to submit. My confused mind seemed to be struggling between indignation and contempt for the creature before me, and loving pity and tender compassion for my tortured son. I need not say which prevailed. The hopeful thought that I might again buy my son's freedom came quickly to my mind. The well-stocked farm was mine and was soon to be my boy's. I had money in the bank. All, all was now the merest dross in my sight, and Groundwig could have it all, and I even began to look upon him as a mild-mannered, well-disposed, honest gentleman, who would obligingly take all my earthly goods and in return bring back my son. Thus encouraged, I almost gleefully asked him what price he had fixed for my boy's ransom.



“ ‘Madam,’ he answered, ‘I am glad to know you are such a matter-of-fact woman, and that you so sensibly come right down to business. Your son is my prisoner, but he is not mine alone. I am still at the mercy of others, I have some heart and a little manhood left. They have none of either. They want gold, and have been promised it. I want gold, and am playing a desperate game to get it. You can help me to carry out my plans, obtain the gold and regain your son.’

“ ‘I understand you,’ I said, interrupting him, ‘and am willing to accede to your wishes. The ready money I have I can arrange to hand you in a day or two. This farm I can sell for a good round sum at any time, and for cash. I will proceed this day and make the sale. You come at this hour day after to-morrow, or a later day if you require more time, bring with you my son, and the money I have on hand and the proceeds from the sale of the farm shall be paid you. I will give no alarm. I will make no human being my confidant. I will not seek your arrest. I will put no detective on your track. The object of your coming here shall be known to none other than Henry and myself. When you shall return and be ready to depart I will not watch your going, nor seek in any manner to give you trouble, but will wish you a speedy and pleasant meeting with your comrades, only asking that our parting shall be forever and ever. What I promise, you have the pledge made on an honest woman’s honor, shall be religiously fulfilled.’

“ ‘Mrs. Groundwig,’ he replied, ‘you do not quite

understand me. I do not want your gold, I want your name.'

"Good heavens! What could he mean?—don't want my gold, but wants my name—my name! What can he want of my name? How can my name release my imprisoned boy?"

## CHAPTER XXI.

### GROUNDWIG'S INFAMOUS DEMAND.

“ ‘Mrs. Groundwig, you seem surprised. I do not wonder at it. But it is time this almost tragic interview was brought to a close. I will explain my meaning so clearly that you will not fail to understand it. Madam, this document which I hold in my hand, and now exhibit to you, is the last will and testament of Major Holbrook. Don't start. If you scream no one will hear you, and if any one did, it might be all the worse for you. I say that, to all intents and purposes, as far as you and I are concerned, this document is Holbrook's will. No matter if you are prepared to say that you know he never made one. What you know does not count now. This is a good enough will for my purpose. Will you read it? No. Then I will tell you that it bequeaths to me, the preserver of his life on the battle-field, and his faithful friend who ministered to his wants during his last sickness, all the property he owned at his death, except the homestead which he bequeaths to his daughter Mary, and a few bequests he makes to certain religious institutions.’

“My blood was boiling hot. I could hear no more. Enraged almost beyond reason, I bade the monster leave my house. ‘Liar, villain, scoundrel,’ I exclaimed, thrusting my clenched fist into his very face, ‘your infamous claim surpasses human in-

genuity. Are you a fiend from hell that you can do this thing? Can't the Almighty prevent an imp of darkness from visiting this earth, assuming the shape of man, and, unmolested, perpetrate the crime you contemplate? Go, Silas Groundwig, begone, and never again befoul the air I breathe with your hateful presence.'

“No sooner had I given utterance to the thoughts that were driving me mad, than a glance at the letter I still held in my hand brought me to a realizing sense of my utter helplessness to rescue my son otherwise than through the intervention of the fiend that stood before me. In his hands was the fate of my boy. Groundwig comprehended the full meaning of this fact far better than I did. He made no attempt to interrupt me. He listened to my fierce tirade as though he expected it, and it moved him no more than if he were stone and I a child. Perceiving I had finished because I had exhausted my strength in hurling upon him my string of epithets, and yet without noticing anything I had said, he continued:

“‘Susan Groundwig, you come far short of understanding the object of my visit here. Do you think I came to tell you of my good fortune, expecting you would congratulate me upon such good luck? I have told you this is Major Holbrook's will. So it is, but it lacks one essential feature to make it legal, and that is another signature. You will see Major Holbrook's name there in its proper place; you have seen him write his name often and no doubt you recognize the signature as genuine. No matter whether you do or not, you see there is but one attesting wit-



ness. The law requires two. Major Holbrook died before the second witness could be summoned. You were present during his last sickness. The whole neighborhood knows that fact. What more appropriate than that you should be the other witness? Don't wring your hands, and pray do save your tears. Business now, not sentiment. Put your name on this paper as a witness, then, on the day fixed for probating the will, go with my attorney to the probate clerk and make oath that you signed your name in Major Holbrook's presence, at his request and in the presence of the gentleman whose name you see there as one of the witnesses. Sign this oath, pledging yourself never to appear in court to contradict the evidence you give before the clerk, and swear you will never, to your dying day, divulge to your son, to Mary Holbrook, or to any other living person any of the circumstances connected with your name appearing as a witness to Holbrook's signature, and all these things done, your son shall be restored to you. What is your answer?'

"Groundwig had talked fast. Hardly sixty seconds had he required to tell me in words that were burned through my heart, the part I was to take in this infamous plot. It seemed an age. The heated iron entered my soul and I suffered all the pangs and pains of death by the most cruel torture for crimes I made myself believe I was about to commit. Asked to be a willing party to robbing Mary Holbrook of the fortune her father had left her! I, who had been a mother to her, who had taught her the precepts of truth, integrity and honesty, to do an act

that would give the lie to all my teachings, and she, too, to be the victim and I to draw the knife and strike the blow! Mary Holbrook, by the perfidy and treachery of her dearest friend, to be made worse than a beggar! No never! Forgive me heaven, forgive me Mary, for harboring a thought so wicked and so infamous for even a second of time.

“But hold! What do I see in the other balance! My darling boy tortured to the death, Mary Holbrook broken-hearted and in her grave. And I their murderer! For myself I care nothing. I am but as a slender reed that any wind may bend and break. But there are two lives in my keeping. By the sacrifice of my good name they are saved. Is it not written that evil may be done that good may come? In consideration of the evil I do, I have the satisfaction of seeing two persons made happy—two beings who are everything in the world to me. I refuse to do the evil, and death or a worse fate befalls the one, and he blood of my blood and life of my life, while the happiness of the other, who is bound to me by ties that need only the marriage vow to claim of me a mother’s love, will be forever destroyed. It is another’s gold and my honor on one side and human lives on the other. If it were only gold, I know that she who would be robbed would submit without a murmur. But where in the bowels of the earth can there be found gold enough to pay for my dishonor, my disgrace, my infamy! Why not call Mary here and tell her all. Tell her that the price of her lover’s ransom is her fortune. I know she would not hesitate to give it. Were she here now and were to

hear all I have heard, I know she would throw her arms around Groundwig's neck and beg him take her lands, her cattle, her bonds, her all, only restore to her her lover. Why should I not make this proposition to him? I see he is getting impatient.

“‘Mr. Groundwig, I told you I would make myself a beggar, and consent that my son should be penniless, if you would restore him to me. My possessions are not enough to satisfy your boundless avarice, and you demand that Mary Holbrook's fortune shall be yours. Is there—can there be no alternative? My son possesses an active brain, and he is industrious. He has an excellent business education. He expects to marry Mary Holbrook. With her property and mine—which will then be his—he will engage in business with every prospect of success. I know he will be willing to settle on you a liberal income for life, and you may name the amount and I will have Mary sign the agreement, I will sign it, and you can release him from his confinement upon his signing it. What say you to this proposition my dear, good friend?’

“‘Woman!’ he replied, ‘are you crazy? Don't you know that such an agreement could be repudiated at any time, and would not be worth the ink it was written with? Mrs. Groundwig, I took you for more of a business woman. But I have no time to dilly-dally with you. Will you or will you not sign that paper and take that oath?’

“‘Silas Groundwig,’ I made bold to reply, ‘I thought you had a speck of humanity left in your breast. I was mistaken. I see you have not the

smallest particle. You want everything or nothing. I now propose that you allow me to call Mary Holbrook, and I know, when I tell her all and show her my dear boy's letter, she will gladly convey to you in legal form all the property you claim is bequeathed you in Major Holbrook's will. That is all you could get were I to sign my name to that paper, and were the document really the will you represent it to be. I will go and——'

"The brute stopped me, and raised his arm as if to strike me. I did not flinch a step. We stood there face to face. I saw he was immovable. I felt he would not yield an iota from the demand he made of me. I was prepared for what followed.

" 'Mrs. Groundwig, will this palaver never cease? Your last proposition is the least business-like of all. I mean business. You mean nonsense. You know that any release Mary Holbrook could make of her property would, under the circumstances, be of no more value to me than though it were written with a pen dipped in water. The last will and testament, however, of my long-time friend, who owed his life to me, duly probated, will give me the undisputed title to all the property bequeathed me, and with your name as a witness, and your sworn promise not to appear in court in case the will is contested, I shall have little or no trouble in establishing its genuineness. But, woman, I am arguing when I should be dictating. I must have your name on that paper instantly, or I will leave you, and as my presence is so hateful to you, I will leave you forever, and Henry Winters, whom I hate as bad as you hate me, shall be tortured to death before the sun



sets to-morrow night. This is plain talk, and I trust you understand it.'

'Horried almost beyond endurance at his merciless threat, still I was almost glad he had not permitted me to drag in another to relieve me in part of the disgrace and infamy he proposed I should consent to. I began to feel that I alone should accept this sacrifice, and trust to heaven to prevent the consummation of the outrage upon the innocent victim. Alone I must shoulder the unequal burden. If it shall make me deformed in body, as I know it will in mind, and if at last it obstructs my passing the pearly gates, I will ask to lay the burden at my Savior's feet, and tell Him all my story, and I have no fear but He will find a place for me, for may He not say in heaven as He said on earth, 'her sins are forgiven, for she loved much.'

'How these thoughts rushed through my brain. I felt my very soul was on fire. But there stood Groundwig. He was waiting my reply. Yonder stood my boy. I saw him, bound hands and feet, and I saw the blood oozing out from beneath the galling chains. His sunken eyes and hollow cheeks told the rest of the story of the torture. His chained hands were outstretched towards me. He, too, was waiting my reply. God in heaven, can I resist that imploring look! My son, my son, I cried in agony of despair, I give my soul to save your life, and seizing the paper and pen, and where he directed, I wrote, Matilda Winters. I signed the oath, kissed the Bible and was alone with my sin. Picking up the crumpled letter, all stained with tears, and placing it in my bosom, I sought my chamber and needed rest.

“For a month I lay sick with a raging fever. Most of the time I was delirious, and they said I talked of a will, of my darling boy, of Groundwig and of some great crime I had committed. These things were all mysteries to my attendants, for at that time no public mention had been made of the will.

“One day when I felt quite strong, I called Mary to my bedside and asked her if there were any tidings from my son. Between her kisses and her sobs she told me that not one word had been heard from him since his disappearance. ‘If you are strong enough,’ Mary continued, ‘to read a letter which a strange man is now bringing in—a letter which he has brought every day since you were sick, and which he refuses to put in any other hands than yours—perhaps something may be learned of the lost one.’ I nodded my head. The strange man was invited in, and he handed me the letter. Mary opened it and I read it:

“MADAM:—Circumstances which I had no hand in shaping prevent my restoring your boy to you as I promised. I pledge you the word of a villain—a pledge which only a villain can keep—that your son shall be well treated and well cared for, and not until he is restored to you will I claim any right to the property concerning which I interviewed you.

“The letter bore no signature. It was not necessary. I knew too well who sent it.

“Eighteen months have passed since I read that letter. During all these months not a word from my boy. Not a word even from Groundwig. How singular that I wanted to again see that villain and really longed to receive another letter from him. He neither came nor wrote. I have now given up all

hopes of ever again seeing my noble boy. I have been growing weaker day by day, and feel my life will not much longer be spared me. Yesterday I was asked by the probate judge about the will. He said he had just been elected to the office, and that, in looking over a mass of papers, he had discovered what purported to be the last will and testament of Stephen Holbrook. It had been properly proven, and, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary it must be taken for what it purported to be. He asked me a great many questions about the will, but I shook my head to all of them. There was my oath! My lips were sealed. But I had never gone to the judge's office and sworn that I signed the paper in the presence of Major Holbrook and at his request. Yet the will showed that I had done so. I did not dare to charge that some one had falsely represented me. I dared not say anything. When the judge had gone, Mary came in. She put her arms around my neck and asked me—Mary Holbrook asked me—if that was her father's will and if I had signed it as a witness, and if I knew that her father had willed the most of his property to a stranger? She did not chide me. She did not appear angry with me. She simply wanted to know if that was her father's will. I could only answer, 'to-night I am weak, Mary, and more of a child than you are. I do not understand your question now. It is getting dark, and I am so weary and must rest. Come to me, Mary, in the morning when I shall awake and I will talk with you about your father. I will tell you——'

And here Matilda Winters' story ended.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### PERJURY EXPOSED.

At an early hour the court-room was crowded with interested spectators, and long before the time for court to convene the deputies had been compelled to refuse admission to scores of strangers who had come a long distance to attend the trial. The interest in the proceedings was on the increase. The morning paper contained Aunt Matilda's story, and the whole town was in the highest state of excitement. Not a person acquainted with that lady but believed every word was true. It had cleared up many mysterious circumstances which the villagers at Bradford Junction had from time to time discussed, but only to be puzzled and suspicious. Now all was explained. No longer mystery, no longer doubts, no longer misgivings, but the character of Matilda Winters shone out pure and spotless as the fleecy clouds which accompany the setting sun.

The judge took his seat. "Sheriff, open court." That officer cried out in a sharp, shrill voice, "O ye, O ye, O ye, this honorable court is now convened pursuant to adjournment." The clerk called the roll of jurors and found they were all present, and the Judge proceeded to announce his decision on the motion to admit the narrative of Matilda Winters as evidence. The opinion was brief and to the effect that while the court felt the statement carried with



it all the sanctity of an oath, because it was prepared at a time when the writer believed she had not long to live, and, in fact, did not live but a few hours after the narrative was finished, yet it was not her dying declaration made on her death-bed. Motion to admit must be overruled. The defense will proceed with their testimony."

"If the court please," said Mr. Hale, "we rest the case of Miss Holbrook."

It was clearly manifest that the sympathy of the audience was with the lady, and during the few moments' recess which was given the attorneys for Groundwig to arrange their evidence, everybody discussed the merits of the evidenceso far introduced. The spectators believed the testimony proved conclusively that the will was a forgery. One of the witnesses to Major Holbrook's alleged signature was proven to have died before the paper was signed. Was not that evidence alone sufficient to annul the will?

It was proven that at the time the alleged will was written by a typewriting machine and up to the time of Major Holbrook's death, there had been no such letter used in typewriters, and hence it was impossible for Major Holbrook to have signed his name to a document containing that style of letter.

It was proven that at the time of Major Holbrook's death there was no such church society as the one to which the sum of three thousand dollars was bequeathed, and hence Major Holbrook could not have caused such a bequest to be inserted in his will. And Matilda Winters, whose name was affixed as a

witness to Major Holbrook's signature, had declared on her death-bed that the will was a forgery. Not that her signature was a forgery, but her dying declarations went to prove that the signature of Major Holbrook was a forgery. Yet there was the question to consider as to how much weight would be given by the jury to a death-bed statement made under such circumstances. The jury was the judge of the weight to be given such testimony, and they might discard it entirely.

Did not this evidence make out a plot and a conspiracy, of the most wicked nature, to rob Mary Holbrook of the bulk of her possessions, and was not the will shown to be a base forgery? Then there was the startling narrative told by Mrs. Winters. That explained every thing and proved every thing. But, alas, it was not evidence. The jury had not been allowed to separate, and notwithstanding the court prohibited the bailiff from furnishing the jury with newspapers, yet every body hoped that in some manner one single copy of that paper might accidentally find its way into the jury room.

In the midst of the discussion, the recess ended, quietness reigned, and Groundwig's side of the case was commenced. It was fortunate for him that the crowd believed his crimes would be unearthed and that he would fail in his deep-laid plot. There was an undercurrent getting under rapid headway that boded no good to the miscreant. His life was in the keeping of the jury. To win his case was to lose his life. To lose his case, then let Groundwig have a care. Yet the fellow seemed conscious of his inno-

cence and confident that his case was just and that he would win it.

The first witness called was Stephen D. Hickman, who, upon being sworn, stated he was a copyist and had been engaged in that business for many years; that when residing in Hartford, Connecticut, he was called upon by a gentleman who gave his name as Stephen Holbrook, to make a copy of a document which he said was his will. The gentleman was very anxious the copy should be exceedingly plain and legible, so that it could be read by persons unaccustomed to reading writing. "I had just commenced to use a typewriting machine," the witness stated, "and I proposed to copy his paper with the machine, showing him samples of the work. He seemed very much pleased and employed me to make the copy."

*Ques.* Do you recognize this document as your work?

*Ans.* I do.

"Take the witness, Mr. Hale," was the quick response of Groundwig's attorney.

*Mr. Hale:* How long were you copying the will?

*Ans.* Off and on two or three days. It was new work and I made errors, which I corrected by re-writing until I had a copy that was perfect.

*Ques.* Where do you live now?

*Ans.* In the town of Menton, in this State.

*Ques.* How long have you lived there?

*Ans.* Some three years.

*Ques.* Who pays your expenses here?

*Ans.* Mr. Groundwig.

*Ques.* Who asked you to come here as a witness?

*Ans.* Mr. Groundwig.

*Ques.* How did he ascertain that you wrote that document?

*Ans.* I do not know.

*Ques.* Ever have any other dealings with Mr. Groundwig?

*Ans.* No, sir.

*Ques.* How long have you known him?

*Ans.* Four or five years.

*Ques.* Seen him frequently?

*Ans.* Five or six times.

*Ques.* The first time you saw him, I suppose, was when he asked you to copy the will?

*Ans.* Yes, sir!

“Hold, there, stop!” fairly yelled one of the opposing counsel. I object to that question as leading, and I object to the answer. The witness does not understand it. They have led him on in this smooth way until his answers have been made mechanically, and he has answered unconscious of what he has been saying. It is a trick of counsel. I ask the court to strike out the answer. Such practice is infamous.”

But the mischief had been done. No matter whether strictly in accordance with the rules of evidence or not, to strike out, wouldn't mend the matter; to insist that the witness did not understand the question, counted nothing. The witness had admitted that Silas Groundwig was the man who had represented himself to be Stephen Holbrook. The court ruled the question was leading, and hence, an improper one, and instructed the jury that the answer was not to be considered as testimony.



“We are through with the witness,” remarked Mr. Hale.

Groundwig’s counsel was in an awkward dilemma. To ask the witness to explain his answer was dangerous. To dismiss him without questioning him further was admitting that he was not worthy of belief. The counsel did the only safe thing he could, and that was to excuse the witness “for the present,” trusting that a part of the blow might be warded off by the ruling of the court.

“James Martin will please step forward and be sworn,” was the startling announcement by Groundwig’s attorney. The judge, jurors and audience could not conceal their surprise and astonishment. The counsel for Miss Holbrook appeared agitated and troubled, but were soon put to their ease by a brief conference with a stranger, who, from time to time, had consulted with them. Some said he was a celebrated detective who had been employed to unveil the conspiracy if there were a conspiracy.

The person answering to the name of James Martin came forward and took his place on the witness stand. All eyes were upon him. He stood the stare without moving a muscle. He looked like a bundle of nerves, turned, twisted and shaped into the form of a man.

*Ques.* What is your name?

*Ans.* James Martin.

*Ques.* Is that your signature (showing the witness the alleged will).

*Ans.* It is.

*Ques.* Under what circumstances did you sign that paper?

*Ans.* One day I was going past Major Holbrook's residence when Mr. Groundwig called me in, and the Major, who was lying sick on a bed, asked me to sign my name as a witness to his signature, telling me the paper showed me was his will.

*Ques.* Any other person there besides Major Holbrook, Mr. Groundwig, and yourself?

*Ans.* Yes, sir, an elderly lady, who Major Holbrook addressed as Mrs. Winters, who, also, at the request of the Major, signed her name directly under mine, and two gentlemen, whose names I do not know.

*Ques.* Did you know a person in that neighborhood by the name of William Bush?

*Ans.* I never did.

*Ques.* Did you ever board with a person by the name of William Bush?

*Ans.* No, sir.

*Ques.* Did you ever work for a person by the name of William Bush?

*Ans.* No, sir.

*Ques.* Are you alive?

*Ans.* I think I am, sir.

*Ques.* Were you ever dead?

*Ans.* Not that I am aware of.

*Ques.* Were you ever put in a coffin and buried?

*Ans.* Not to my knowledge.

*Groundwig's Attorney:* That is all. Take the witness.

*Mr. Hale:* Where were you born?

*Ans.* In New York State, sir.

*Ques.* When did you come West?

*Ans.* Six years ago.

*Ques.* Where do you live now?

*Ans.* On a farm, about twenty miles from Bradford.

*Ques.* Had you frequently passed Major Holbrook's house?

*Ans.* Very seldom.

*Ques.* Mr. Groundwig asked you to come in, did he?

*Ans.* Yes, sir.

*Ques.* Had you met him before?

*Ans.* I did not quite catch on to your question.

*Ques.* I ask you if you had ever met Mr. Groundwig before that time he called you into Major Holbrook's house?

*Ans.* I had not.

*Ques.* You were a stranger, passing by, Groundwig saw you, called you in, asked you to sign your name, and without any hesitation you did so?

*Ans.* Yes, sir.

*Ques.* The gentlemen you met there did not sign their names, did they?

*Ans.* Not while I was there.

*Ques.* Were they asked to sign?

*Ans.* Not that I know of.

*Ques.* Were you ever at Holbrook's house after that time?

*Ans.* No, sir.

*Ques.* Do you own a farm?

*Ans.* No, sir.

*Ques.* You work out by the month or year, do you?

*Ans.* Yes, sir.

*Ques.* Did you ever work for Samuel Turner?

*Ans.* Yes, sir, several months.

*Ques.* Did you ever work for Peter Livingstone?

*Ans.* What?

*Ques.* I asked you if you ever worked for Peter Livingstone?

*Ans.* I think I did for a few weeks.

*Ques.* Have any trouble with him?

*Ans.* Well, nothing much.

*Ques.* Were you indicted for forging his name to a note and obtaining five hundred dollars?

*Ans.* Yes, sir. But I was tried and acquitted.

*Ques.* On what grounds were you acquitted?

*Ans.* I swore that I—I—I—

*Ques.* Well, sir, speak quick.

*Ans.* I swore I—I—I could not write nor read!  
But—

The audience could not wait for the sentence to be finished. The ludicrousness of the situation was keenly appreciated by all. One general burst of laughter, ending in a derisive wail in concert, participated in by everybody except the dignified court, the witness, Groundwig and his attorneys, provoked the judge to order the room cleared, but he at once relented and revoked the order, much to the gratification of the spectators.

*Judge:* Proceed, Mr. Hale, with the cross-examination.

*Ques.* You can now complete your answer; when the audience so boisterously interrupted you, you were saying “but—”

*Ans.* I commenced to say that I have since that time learned to write my name.



The audience began to think they had halloed before they were out of the woods.

*Ques.* How long after you were charged with forging the name of Mr. Livingstone did you learn to write?

*Ans.* About six months.

*Ques.* Did you learn to write any more than your own name?

*Ans.* That was all.

*Ques.* How long after your acquittal of the crime of forgery before you went to living where you now do?

*Ans.* About two months.

*Ques.* And you say you had resided there only ten days when you were asked to sign your name to Major Holbrook's will?

*Ans.* I don't know.

*Ques.* Don't know what?

*Ans.* I don't know.

*Groundwig's attorney:* The witness is under the protection of the court, and I ask your honor to protect him from the insulting questions of the gentleman who has the honor of Major Holbrook in charge.

*Mr. Hale:* Your attempt, sir, at sarcasm will fall still-born in this court-house.

*Judge.* Proceed with the cross-examination.

*Ques.* Under what name were you indicted for forgery?

*Ans.* William Wallace.

*Ques.* You say you learned to write only your name—was the name you learned to write James Martin or William Wallace?

*Ans.* I don't remember.

*Ques.* What, after reaching the age of forty years you learned to write your name and don't know what name you learned to write?

*Ans.* Well, sir; I learned to write both names.

*Ques.* After your acquittal why did you so suddenly change your name?

*Ans.* I don't know.

*Ques.* Did you write this letter? (Showing the witness a half sheet of foolscap covered with writing.)

*Ans.* I don't remember.

*Ques.* Now Mr. James Martin or Mr. William Wallace, or whatever your name may be, is it not a fact that you can read and write, and that you committed perjury when you swore in the forgery case that you could not write your name?

*Ans.* Yes, I did learn to read and write when a boy, but I have roughed it so much and got out of practice of writing that at the time Livingstone's name was forged I could not write.

*Ques.* I propose now to compare your handwriting with the signature on that alleged will. Take this pen and write your name on that piece of paper.

The witness was now so agitated that the lookers-on pitied him, and they wished the cruel torture would end. But Mr. Hale did not propose to lose any vantage ground. When the witness trembled so he could not write, and became so agitated he could not speak, Mr Hale, in a pleasing, reassuring manner, asked him why the request to sign his name so unnerved him.

The witness sat stiff as a stick, pale as the newly

whitewashed ceiling over his head, and not a syllable passed his lips.

Mr. Hale rose to his feet, stepped to within a few inches of the witness-stand, and in a louder voice than the attorney had any time employed, and looking the witness straight in the eye, said to him:

“Sir, does not your agitation come from the knowledge you have been swearing to a pack of lies, and the fear that the strong arm of the law will be laid upon you, and cast you in prison? Sir! tell the court and jury, before God strikes you dead, how much Groundwig paid you for this perjury.”

Never was witness more ready to answer a question than was this one now. Hardly had Mr. Hale time to finish the sentence when the answer came:

“He agreed to pay me—”

“Stop, hold there, not another word, witness! You need not answer that question,” yelled Mr. Waddel of the opposing counsel. “The court should not permit a witness to criminate himself without explaining to him his legal rights. I ask your honor to instruct the witness that he need not answer the question.”

The court so instructed him.

“I withdraw the question,” said Mr. Hale. But enough of the truth had been told to destroy the credibility of the witness. It was evident to every one who had heard the testimony that the man was a tool of Groundwig’s, and for pay had committed perjury, and that Groundwig had made the mistake of affixing to the will the name of a person who had died a few days before the death of Major Holbrook, thus corroborating that part of Mrs. Winters’

statement which fixed the time Groundwig prepared the will as several months after the Major's death.

Groundwig's cunning was manifest in the provision of the will bequeathing a large sum to the popular Lutheran Church. This bequest made many advocates of the validity of the will. Witnesses were called, who proved that while there was no such church at the time of Holbrook's death, such an organization was talked of, and at the time of the trial was the most prosperous church in that part of the country. No doubt the church was being built when Groundwig framed the will, but he made the mistake of not ascertaining whether such an association was organized at the time of Holbrook's death.

No further evidence was introduced. The lawyers made their arguments—long, learned and able pleas on both sides. The judge read his charge to the jury, reviewing the testimony on both sides, the jury retired in custody of a bailiff and the court was adjourned until the next morning.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

### FREE WOOL, THE VERDICT.

In the reading-room of one of the hotels at the county seat, quite a group of people had assembled to discuss the will trial and the news of the day. The judge came in and began perusing the evening paper. Having finished reading, a farmer, who had been a witness on the trial, asked him if he meant to be understood in his remarks upon the tariff to say that the farmers received no protection on any of their crops.

“That is what I said—no real protection,” replied the judge.

“I am satisfied that is so,” said the farmer, “as to the principal products, except wool; you will admit, of course, that wool is protected, but I presume you will urge that what is claimed as protection is more imaginary than real. It seems to me, though, if the protection were withdrawn, wool could not be grown in this country in competition with Australia, Spain and the Central and South American States. I am not making this point for the purpose of entering into an argument with you, Judge, because in the main I think your talk to the jury on the tariff was first-rate law, but to obtain information for myself and others.”

“I appreciate your motive, Farmer Lake,” responded the Judge, “and I will answer your ques-

tion in the same candid manner. I believe if wool were put on the free list, the result would be an increase of the American product, bringing as good a price as now, if not better, and a reduction in the price of home-manufactured woolen goods, without decreasing the wages of operatives, and really increasing the profits to the manufacturer. My belief, however, is of no more consequence than that of any other man, unless I can maintain it by good and sufficient reasons."

By this time the entire group became attentive listeners, and when the Judge stopped, as though for an answer from his questioner, whether he would give those reasons, several bystanders replied they would like to hear him on that subject.

"You all know," the Judge proceeded, "the American woolen mills, as an industry, have had and are having a greater struggle for existence than any other large manufacturing interest in the country. The opinion is quite general among the owners of those factories that this struggle comes in a great measure from the high tax on foreign wool. There are many grades of wool not raised in this country and can not be, for reasons which I need not stop to enumerate, which enter into the manufacture of carpets, blankets, cloths and dress goods generally. That wool is admitted free into other countries extensively engaged in manufacturing woolen goods, which enables them to sell their product in most of the markets of the world cheaper than the United States can. In fact, large quantities of those goods are sold in this country, notwithstanding the high tariff on

them. Were those grades of wool admitted free, there would be a far greater amount of woolen goods manufactured, which would require the use of more, rather than less, American wool, insuring better prices to the flockmasters. It is certainly the best thing for labor to bring those grades of wool here in the raw state, than in manufactured goods, and it is better for the American farmer that those countries should raise wool for export than wheat and cattle. This country, with free wool, could go into all the markets of the world, where not prohibited, with the better class of woolen goods, which is the kind it is in the habit of making, and sell them in competition with any foreign manufacturer. Of course I mean if we were permitted to take in pay the commodities other countries have to dispose of. Then the frequent bankruptcy of woolen factories would end, the manufacturing of woolen goods would revive, the numerous silent mills would be set to work, and employment furnished to thousands of idle men and women, at good wages, enlarging the ability of these armies of operatives to buy bread and meat."

"Even if admitting," a spectator remarked, "wool free should not result as beneficial to the woolen industry as the owners of those factories think, would not the reduction in the cost of woolen goods be worth millions of dollars to the farmers and laborers?"

"There can be no doubt of it," said the Judge. "The woolen blanket and the sack of flour go hand-in-hand. Tax flour for the benefit of the farmer as the blanket is taxed for the alleged benefit of the

wool-grower, and the people would rise in rebellion. Yet there is more justice in making the consumer pay a tax on flour than on blankets, because the farmers number nearly one-half the population, while the wool-growers who make raising sheep a business, and who are the only persons claimed to be benefited by the tax on wool, number less than an hundred thousand. The tariff on wool if it really benefits any one benefits about one person in six hundred of population, and the other five hundred and ninety-nine contribute a portion of their earnings to enable the other one to raise wool profitably. The government don't require the people to contribute anything to the farmer to make his crops profitable, and yet he has to compete with the cheapest labor that toils on the earth. What justice is there in making wool the exception?"

"Don't you think the cheap labor of other countries will prevent America from selling woolen goods and many other manufactured products in the markets of the old world?" asked Farmer Lake.

"I do not," was the Judge's reply, "the biggest bugbear ever invented is that of the inability of America to compete with the cheap labor of Europe. The farmer is doing it every year. He is compelled to do it to a disadvantage by reason of the unjust tariff laws, which require him to spend his money where the things he buys are the dearest. But when it comes to the labor employed in manufactures, there is not so much difference in wages, when results are considered, as you may think. The question of wages is not so much the amount paid as the



amount earned. If the German, the Frenchman, the Italian, earn one-half what the American earns, and the former are paid one-half as much as the latter, then there is little or no difference in the price of labor. If the goods of American make are more serviceable than the foreign manufacture, and only the question of labor in the way, then may this country be able to sell woolen goods in competition with any and every foreign country. It is not the very cheap labor of such countries as India, China, Japan and Mexico, that our manufacturers have to compete with, it is chiefly the labor of England, Germany and France, which, when its relative earning power is considered, is as well paid as in the United States.

“I think it folly for a great nation like this, with its immense resources, having the best improved machinery in the world, possessing the most enterprising people on the earth, talking about its inability to sell goods alongside of any other country, because of the difference in the cost of labor. As a proposition by itself whatever difference there possibly might be between the earning value of labor in America and its earning value in Europe and the Central and South American States, is more than equalized by the admission into this country of free raw material. That change alone in the tariff laws would stimulate the various manufacturing industries of the country, and as the price of labor is fixed by the supply and demand, labor would quickly catch its advantage and hold it indefinitely. A surplus of manufactured goods and a surplus of farm products, means a surplus of labor, and a sur-

plus of labor means cheap labor. Labor, no matter whether employed in the factory, the mine, the mill, the shop, or on the farm, is alike interested in a market for all each other produce. The protective tariff prevents it finding those markets, and hence creates a surplus of manufactured goods, which is termed overproduction, and the result must be either low wages or less days for the employment of labor.

“Under a protective tariff, seconded by labor-saving machinery, America has developed a manufacturing capacity double the wants of the people. Protection has protected the infant industries until they have grown to be giants, and now, instead of trying to put the giants in beds made for infants, give them room commensurate with their size. Give them the broad world to roam in. Overproduction is a misnomer as long as there are enough consumers of these goods to keep these industries running full time. What matters it that only a portion of those consumers are in America? Why prevent the remainder from being supplied by putting shackles on trade and commerce? Don't we all know by this time that the tariff not only restricts trade, but retards and prohibits it? Hence comes the surplus of labor, with its attendant evils, shut-outs, idleness and low wages. If the farmer and the laborer were permitted to have one prayer granted, that would bring to them the greatest possible blessings, they would not pray for better prices for farm produce, nor for higher wages for labor, but that heaven might save them from a high protective tariff. Then the other blessings would come as a natural consequence.”

“Would you also favor admitting iron ore, copper, steel and coal, tin plate, salt, sugar and lumber, free?” asked a bystander.

“Yes,” answered the Judge; “there are portions of this country where there are large manufacturing interests that can procure iron, steel and coal cheaper from abroad than at home, and they are languishing and threatened with bankruptcy because of the tariff on those articles. I would not fetter one part of the land to benefit another part. With the tariff removed from those materials the possibilities of this country in manufacturing products that wool, iron, steel, copper and lumber enter largely into, would be almost marvellous. This country would not fear the rivalry of Great Britain or France, but would sell such goods throughout the world, and, instead of closing long-established manufactures, all of them would be kept in motion, giving employment to more men at good wages and full time.”

“I really like such broad views,” said Farmer Lake, “as you advance, because they fit without a flaw the vast agricultural interests of our country, as well as its great manufacturing industries, and they keep in the foreground the importance of furnishing labor, constant employment and good pay. You certainly then must stand by the ‘home market.’”

“Most certainly,” remarked the Judge, “I stand by not only the ‘home market’ but the foreign market as well. Protection permits of but the one market. I would abolish protection that both markets might be stimulated. The surplus farm produce is increasing more rapidly than the consumers.

This comes from the large emigration of foreigners, who engage in farming, and the wealthy syndicates that cultivate vast tracts of land and raise immense herds of cattle. A market for this increasing surplus must be found abroad or the prices will rule so low that the farmer will be unable to earn his living, and, in time, his farm will not be good security for even the taxes levied on it. Make an increased demand at home for farm products by repealing all laws which prevent the manufacturers from going into the markets of the world with their goods, and the number of home consumers of bread and meat would be largely increased. The new markets opened for manufactured goods will mean new markets for the farmers' product, for the ships that carry the products of American factories to every civilized land, will find it to their interest to carry to the same markets the products of the American farm. There are but few of those markets of the old world but will buy meat and bread of this country if they can pay for them in the articles they have to sell. There is almost an endless line of goods other countries have to dispose of, which this country uses and does not produce, or if it does produce them it could more profitably produce something else, that they will exchange for food and raiment. Insist upon demanding for the products of the American loom and farm only gold and silver, and those countries simply can not pay in that way even if ever so much inclined to. Nor are they compelled to, because other nations will exchange products for products. When this country is prepared to ex-



change our wares for theirs, then we can strike a trade with them. This is a great world. I sometimes think we underestimate the number of people in it and the vastness of their wants, and our ability to satisfy those wants when a fair interchange of commodities is permitted. To hem ourselves in and rely on a home market for what we grow and what we make, is the most narrow-minded policy that can be conceived. Given almost a limitless area of territory, with natural resources embracing most of the elements of wealth essential to a nation's prosperity, with established industries capable of manufacturing double the product there is a home demand for, with enough lands under cultivation to produce treble the quantity of food required for home consumption, we submit to legislation that prohibits our finding markets beyond our borders for the surplus products of factory and farm, just because we are wedded to the phantom theory of an exclusive home market."

"I have heard it stated, Judge, that a large proportion of the articles sold by the United States to foreign countries are unprotected products. Do you know how this is?" asked Lawyer Hale.

"That is an important feature of this subject," said the Judge. "I understand that five-sixths of our exports are made by the unprotected producers. This fact proves that protection is not necessary to enable us to place our products in foreign markets."

"Judge, do you advise the farmers to organize a political party made up of themselves alone, to help bring about this change in tariff legislation?" asked Farmer Lake.

“By no means,” responded the Judge, “there are parties enough now. Another party would only endanger the success of the reform. The farmers should attend the caucuses of the party which is pledged to tariff reform, and vote solid for men who are known to favor the reform. No matter what the office may be, local, state or national, vote for men who are for a reduction of the tariff. Create a public sentiment in favor of this reform in every township, and to do this, vote for the candidates that stand for putting raw material on the free list and reducing the tariff on necessaries to a revenue basis and abolishing protection for the purpose of protection. If the man who thus favors the farmer’s interest is not put on the ticket you have been in the habit of voting, and his opponent is an advocate of tariff reform, you are as much bound to vote against the man nominated by your party, as you are bound to provide for the support of your wife and children.” Let this rule apply particularly to the election of Congressmen and to members of the State legislatures which elect the United States Senators.

“I have listened to your remarks with a good deal of satisfaction,” said the farmer. “I firmly believe that it is not protection that labor should look to for steady work and good wages, but rather to good markets, home and foreign, for both manufactured goods and the surplus product of the soil, and to have them, protection must be gotten out of the way. It is apparent to my mind that you suggest the only manner tariff can benefit labor, and that is, to have just as little tariff as is needed for revenue.

It should be taken off of raw material, and most of the necessaries of life, and all restrictions on American commerce should be removed. This I understand to be tariff reform. Such a reform I favor. The success of such a reform will, I believe, restore the farm to the profitable business it was years ago, will enable the farmer to speedily rid himself of the mortgage nightmare, and will bring about the farm all the comforts which make people contented in their homes."

"Truer words were never uttered," proceeded the Judge. "You have stated the whole case. Free raw material, and the adjustment of the tariff laws on business and economic principles will give the manufacturers all they can do to supply the demand for their goods, home and abroad. Then labor will have steady employment and good wages. Wherever the manufacturer goes with his surplus, the farmer will go with his. This disposition of the surplus must raise the price of farm produce. Then, without protection, the manufacturer prospers, the laborer prospers, and the farmer prospers. This is what tariff reform will do."

On the morrow, on the convening of court, the jury were escorted to their seats by the sheriff, and the crowd of spectators eagerly sought to read the verdict in the jurors' faces. A painful silence possessed the vast audience. It was known late at night that a verdict had not been agreed upon. The contest in the jury-room had excited the people to a high pitch of anxiety, and while to the spectators the case appeared to have but one side, yet the long time

the jury were deliberating had created a feeling of doubt just sufficient to make the audience eager to know the verdict.

The Clerk.—“Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed upon a verdict?”

Foreman.—“We have” (handing a paper to the clerk).

Clerk (reading the paper).—“We, the jury, find that the document purporting to be the last will and testament of Stephen Holbrook is a forgery.”

The audience ached to testify in cheers and other demonstrations of applause its approval of the verdict, but the previous warning of the court, and the threat of the sheriff to arrest the first person that violated the order, kept the assemblage from giving vent to their pent-up feelings. The court-room was quickly emptied, and once outside the building the crowd went wild with enthusiasm. In the excitement Groundwig had disappeared, and Martin and Hickman were never more heard of in that part of the West. Fortunate for them they had anticipated the anger of the populace by hurrying out of town.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### A GHOST'S DISPATCH SENT TO A DEAD WOMAN.

The excitement over the will case soon died away. Months passed rapidly. No matter how black a heart the personator of Henry Winters may have had, he seemed to possess the power to bestow upon Mary Holbrook love as sincere as that which springs from a heart that never knew ought but innocence.

Winters continued to faithfully serve his employers, but no sooner was he off duty than he sought the company of Mary Holbrook. Hours were daily spent in talking over the events of their childhood, and hardly an incident, no matter how trivial, could be referred to by Mary, but the impostor was able to take the subject from her lips and complete it. Sometimes when his thoughts were fixed on other scenes and other events, which Mary knew nothing of, she would gently chide him for his indifference to her prattle, and then he would recover himself only to wonder whether there was any suspicion lurking in her heart of his deception.

“Do you remember that beautiful summer evening, Henry, when we were enjoying one of those delightful sails on the lake, and when we saw the sun accompanied in its setting by that brilliant light, and encircled by a sky of such radiant splendor? How I did laugh when you said the sun went down into the water to kiss its shadow because it had nothing else

to kiss. Do you forget it? You know you said you had rather be a boy than the sun, because you had something better to kiss than shadows. What a magnificent sunset that was! Henry, what can you be thinking of, you don't seem to care to be reminded now of those happy, thrice happy hours. Why? I know I do you wrong, Henry, to talk so. I know I am over-exacting. But I should die were I to think, that, recalling those scenes, when we were so happy together, was painful to you, or that you had lost interest in them. They are among the happiest hours of my life. Were they not yours, dearest Henry?"

"Yes, yes, love, but do not think because I do not on the instant grow enthusiastic over your pleasing reference to them, that I have lost any interest in them. They were my happy hours too, and memory is busy filling my brain with the recollection of hundreds of other like scenes, or like incidents. Prattle on, my love, and I will never tire of listening."

"Now, that is charming, Henry. I like to hear you talk that way. What a merry evening that was! I can't drive it from me, even if I cared to. Do you remember, Henry, when you said the shadows chasing each other across the meadows, through the pastures, and skipping over the fields of grain, were fairies bringing flour to make the wheat; and I told you the fairies got the flour from the great white clouds that were floating over our heads? Didn't we both laugh at the silly things we both said? Somehow or other, my heart is not as light now as it was then. The recollection of those innocent fancies brings no such

thrill of joy to my heart as they did then. Why is it Henry?"

"Oh, you are getting serious, now Your cheerful disposition can not brook seriousness, and there is no serious side to beautiful sunsets and charming fairy tales. There is really no place for despondency in your heart, Mary, so away with it, and tell me more about those shadows and those fairies."

"Oh, yes, there were other shadows that came and went. I am so glad you remember them now. It was those fields of grain, growing just where we see them growing now, that you said reminded you of the voyage of life; that the shadows were couriers which came in advance to tell the golden plants to prepare for the rain, and that the black clouds and the wind and the storm, with the sunshine, all helped to mature the yellow grain. That was real poetry; and how it used to gladden my heart to listen so such sweet melody from your lips. I wonder why my Henry, whose soul was once so full of such delicious music, now sees so little sentiment in the shadows, and so little grandeur in the setting sun, and so little beauty in the broad fields of waving grain; do the cares of business so weigh upon my lover that he wearies in telling his love, and desires no longer to gaze inside the books that nature opens to his view all around him? Is he tired of the poetry of love?"

Henry listened to the merry prattle of the innocent girl and wondered if it meant anything more than mere prattle. Taking Mary's hands in his and throwing all the kindly feeling that was possible in his nature into his words, he replied:

“Mary, you forget I am older now, and wiser, I hope, and more of the matter-of-fact man than I was then.”

“No, no,” answered back the girl, “I do not forget it. It is all true; nor do I forget that the poetry born of love never dies and never loses its magic power, even when repeated over and over again. I have read somewhere, or at sometime I have dreamed it, that love never grows old, that it is changeless and never ends, that it came into the world with the first created life, and will leave the world with the last. It came when God came; it will go when God goes. All else may change. The ocean may take the place of the dry land, the mountains may glide away and sit at the bottom of the seas, but love lives forever. Though love has had a language of its own since the morning stars sang together, yet the things unsaid of love are more than the things said. Do not say then, Henry, that your love grows old as you grow older in years. When old age shall come upon us both, and we shall have quite reached the bottom of the hill, when we let go our hands to clasp them again on the other shore, if our lives are holy—”

“Mary, Mary, for heaven’s sake, say no more now. I am faint and sick and weary, and—”

“O, Henry, have I again wounded your feelings? How cruel I am! Forgive me, do forgive me, and I will be more careful in the future. Alas, does my childish prattle about love so distress my darling? I fear you have something on your mind, Henry, that is worrying you. Will you not let your Mary share with you your burthens, whatever they may be?”



“I have no cares, Mary; no troubles, no sorrows when you are by my side. When you spoke of holy love and clasping hands in the world beyond, the image of my sainted mother rose before me like a living being, my feelings overcame me, my head whirled, and I knew not what I said. I am myself now, and can listen to your innocent chidings all the day, and bless you for reminding me that I must not cease for one moment to tell you of my love.”

“No, Henry; I am not so exacting as that; yet I live only in your love. Withdraw but a glimmer of it and I die.”

The lovers separated. The one to enter upon a career of intrigue, plotting and villiany of the deepest dye; the other to retire to her room and wrestle with her heart to keep it from doubting her lover's love.

The next morning Henry had answered a call for information from the superintendent of the road, when the wires bore a message which so startled him that he shook as with the ague, and the blood rushed to his head as though the fever and the chill came together. The name of the person addressed was Matilda Winters. Matilda Winters! Who above the earth could be sending a dispatch to her? She had been dead nearly a year. What could it mean? Henry had no time to soliloquize. The message came quick and fast, quicker and faster, it seemed to him, than any dispatch that ever before came over the wires. So quick and so fast that his pen could not keep pace with the click of the instrument, and had the click come ever so slow it would have made no

difference; he could not have put the message on paper had his life been at stake. The pen dropped from his hands, his whole frame trembled from head to foot, the room suddenly darkened, and he reeled and fell like a drunken man. The dizziness lasted but a moment. The fall aroused him to a consciousness of the situation. He realized that he must act, and act quickly. He had heard enough of the message to understand that he alone of all the world must hear it, and that all his hopes of the future depended on his keeping it from the knowledge of any other human being. Rising to his feet he made a superhuman effort to throw off the fearful incubus which had borne him to the floor, and, grasping the key of the instrument, he asked that the message be repeated. The words commence to come, O, too slowly now, for it seemed minutes between each syllable; but he listened to each click, click, click, as they came, one after the other, like a battalion of fiends passing before his eyes, each fiend screaming as if to let all the world know that this man's crime should be known to all the world.

Not a word was put on paper. It was a ghost's dispatch sent to a dead woman. It ought never to have been sent. It ought never to have been received. Thus he mused, but only for a moment. In his breast the terrible message was locked up as in an iron chest and the chest at the bottom of the sea. "Saved again, as by a miracle! What a commotion in my brain! What a tumult in my heart! A message from Henry Winters! God in heaven, what can it mean? The Henry Winters I left lifeless on that

unknown shore? He alive! He to sail this day from Liverpool for New York? He coming to his old home, and he to bask again in the light of Mary Holbrook's love? She to be his bride? No, no; it can not, it must not be. No mortal now must come between me and her I love. Henry Winters' plans must be thwarted. He must be prevented from coming to Bradford Junction or communicating with Mary Holbrook until I shall have made her my wife. That accomplished, and the arrangements I have been making to live in a foreign land carried out, I will run all risk of even his discovering us."

The impostor sat down, buried his head in his hands, and coolly contemplated a plan to prevent the proposed visit of the real Henry Winters to his old home. His thoughts flew thick and fast. Anything, everything, no matter what, must be done to stay that fellow's coming. Desperate means should be employed if necessary. Even his rival's death was discussed with his conscience, and it was convinced the crime ought to be committed rather than the impostor should fail in his scheme to marry Mary Holbrook.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### MANNING ENCOUNTERS GROUNDWIG.

It was a lucky circumstance which placed the impostor in charge of the telegraph, or else that message would have been in Mary's hands and he would have been an outlaw against whose life every man's hand might be raised. How wisely providence plans, thought the impostor, and how strangely the things He proposes comes about. Again his telegraph service came to his aid. Without sharing his plans with others and knowing that he could use the wires with the utmost secrecy, he sent the following dispatch:

TO MRS. CAROLINE CARTER, HOLMSTEAD, CONN.:

I am in trouble. You alone can help me out. Leave on first train. Do not fail. Wire me when you will start.

HENRY.

It was two weeks to the time fixed for the wedding. In ten days at the outside, Henry Winters would be in New York, and in three days more he could reach his home. To detain him in that city and prevent his leaving until the marriage should have been solemnized was the first plot to consider. If, upon the discussion of that scheme with the adviser he had summoned, it should be considered impracticable, then he would take the chance and run the risk of arousing Mary's suspicions, by undertaking to persuade her to fix an earlier day for the marriage.



The idea of living in a foreign land had been discussed, and as Mary had no kindred to hold her to her old home, she consented to that plan and became earnestly in favor of it. It had already been given out that the bridal tour would be across the ocean, but it was thought best not to acquaint the neighborhood of the fact that the leave-taking after the wedding might be a final one.

Thus far and thus successfully had the plans of Henry Winters advanced when the awful message came from the supposed dead to the known dead.

In good time the Mrs. Carter arrived. She was the woman in black. She had been instructed by telegraph to repair to a secluded spot in the adjacent forest, where she was at once joined by the impostor. They met inside a rude cabin, built by a woodsman for shelter in the winter, and hardly had the two persons recognized each other, than Henry whispered in a tremulous voice that would at such a time and place have frightened into hysterics any other woman save such as she :

“Mother, where is Groundwig?”

At the mention of this name, the woman started as if to dodge a blow aimed at her head, and, shaking like an aspen leaf, and with a voice unlike that of a human being, and uncontrollable as it was unnatural, she answered :

“Why do you ask that question of me?”

“Because I want to use him, I want to use him bad, I want to use him quick and I know that you not only know where he is, but that where you go he goes, and where he goes you go. Tell me quick ; is

he not near here? I did not telegraph you to bring him with you, because a woman of your quick brain oftener does the right thing without the telling than by the telling."

"I can tell you he is not with me, and, furthermore, I do not know where he is. Can I not bring some one else to assist you?"

"Mother, I know you speak falsely. This is no time to trifle with me. The minutes passing so rapidly may be fatal ones, and you know what it means if my plans miscarry. I tell you, woman, it is a desperate scheme I must have executed, and it will take a desperate man to do it. Do you know of another creature living that can fill the place of Silas Groundwig when there is something unusually damnable to be accomplished?"

"I do not understand you, Charles Manning, if you —"

"Hush, woman! For heaven's sake, do not speak that name here. The leaves are listening; the very air is full of ears, and that name pronounced outside these woods and all is lost. Tell me, and tell me quick, where is Groundwig?"

"Before I answer that question, you tell me what this wicked scheme is, that only he can do."

"Mrs. Carter, you are mad to keep me here in waiting, even for only a moment. You will ruin all by your foolish curiosity. Know then that I want him to go to New York, and I want you to take a message to him, instructing him how to carry out the scheme I have planned."

"Tell me what that scheme is and I will take you

message to him," and had she been made of iron she could not have bore herself more coldly or answered more unconcernedly.

"Will you pledge eternal secrecy?"

"Yes, yes, I like that. Secrets I can keep. No trouble for me to do so. Who on the face of the earth am I to share the secret with except with you and Groundwig? I swear now and eternally."

"Then hear me, Henry Winters is not dead. O do not start nor interrupt me. Enough for you to know he has sent a message here that three days ago he would sail from Liverpool for New York. In six days he will land in that city. You see precious time has already been lost. In two hours the east-bound limited express is due here. I will signal it and you must get aboard and make all speed to deliver Groundwig my letter."

"But Groundwig is not East, he is West."

"West! What great crime is he planning in the West? No matter. I don't care. In three hours the mail train goes west. Be ready to take that. How far west is he? How long will it take you to reach him? Woman, I must know that. Speak, I beseech you, speak quick, don't waste another precious moment trembling as though the night air was chilly when the heat is really oppressive."

The woman was now so agitated that it was with difficulty she could utter a word. For the first time she threw aside her veil and with a wild, demoniac look, exclaimed:

"Groundwig is this moment at the house of Mary—"

The impostor did not wait for the sentence to be completed. He knew too well what Groundwig's presence at Mary Holbrook's meant. The girl had crossed his path and he had sworn to be revenged. With steps fleetier than the deer the impostor bounded through the forest and was not many minutes reaching the house. It was past the hour of midnight. Not a light to be seen anywhere. All was still as silence itself. The door opened with the turn of the knob, and as it opened a man sought to rush out. The impostor quickly grappled him and held him as in a vise. He knew well who his prisoner was, and calling him by name, demanded to know the purpose of his visit. Not waiting for an answer, but with one hand grasping the fellow by the throat, with the other he struck a match and lit a lamp he saw standing on the table. A glance revealed the whole situation.

Mary Holbrook lay prostrate on the floor, senseless, and apparently inanimate, perhaps dead, killed by the villain, who, by another turn of the hand, could be sent to make his peace with heaven. The turn was not made. One miscreant had further use for the other. Flinging him to the floor, and telling him if he moved a finger he would choke him to the death, he bent over the girl, and, satisfied she was alive, lifted her in his arms and laid her upon the lounge. He then noticed a pen in her hand. He knew what that meant. Silas Groundwig was up to his old tricks. There was not a moment to lose. The fellow was in the act of rising. Grappling him again, Charles demanded the paper he had forced



Mary Holbrook to sign. Denial was useless. Yet the denial was made, and Charles, forcibly thrusting his hand into the fellow's pocket, pulled out what appeared to be a legal document. Before he could open it to ascertain how wicked the plot the fellow was engaged in this time, Groundwig spitting out the words, with a hissing lisp, whispered in a voice which sounded as though it came from the throat of a fiend from the regions below, bade the young man, "put back that paper and let me go, or I will tell Mary Holbrook you are Charles Manning and not Henry Winters!" Without a word in reply Charles handed him back the paper, and Silas Groundwig went out into the night and disappeared in the forest.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW GOOD GOD IS TO FILL OUR BITTEREST CUPS  
WITH DREAMS.

At the moment of Groundwig's escape Mary awoke, and, seeing her lover bending over her, she threw her arms about his neck exclaiming in the most agonizing manner: "Thank God, it was only a dream!"

"But, Mary, dear, it was not a dream. It was real that—"

"Not a dream? Not a dream, did you say? What! that you are not Henry Winters, not my Henry, my love, my life! Not a dream! You say it was not a dream? O explain, explain before I go mad, raving, stark mad."

"Calm yourself, my love, you are excited now, and no wonder. Yes, I see you have dreamed many horrid dreams and imagined all sorts of dreadful things, but it was no dream that a villain entered your house and threatened your life unless you signed a paper he thrust in your face—that was real, that was no dream for I saw the monster put the paper in his pocket, but he fled before I could grapple with him and take it from him."

"Yes, yes; it all comes to me now. I remember so distinctly. His voice sounded so like that awful Groundwig. His finger marks must be on my throat for he choked me until I could not breathe, and said

he would kill me unless I signed his paper. No, he didn't tell me what it was, and O, I was too frightened to read it when he told me to. He put a pistol to my head, and with a horrid oath said he would kill me unless I signed my name. I took the pen and wrote, and then I must have swooned, for I remember nothing more until I awoke and found you bending over me. O, horror! that was all real, and real as it was, it was a merry frolic, yes, a merry frolic, compared to the dreadful dream I did dream afterward. A great monster stood over me. I thought it was Ground-wig. His big, black, glaring eyes pierced through my very heart, and I dreamed he was killing me when you came and caught him by the throat, and then, through his clenched teeth, he hissed in a whisper, 'I will tell Mary Holbrook you are Charles Manning and not Henry Winters,' and then I awoke. How good God is to fill our bitterest cups with dreams."

Charles taking Mary's hands in his, looked straight into her eyes as if to closely study her thoughts, and failing to detect the least suspicion in her mind that it was not a dream, implored her to compose herself and let such a frightful fancy pass forever from her thoughts. "It was but a dream" he said, "a horrid and a strange dream; its strangeness makes it the more a dream; and were every other dream that every mortal ever dreamt to come true, and were every dream that every mortal should dream hereafter to come true, the one my Mary dreamt never could. Let heaven be praised."

"Amen," responded the timid girl, who had been

devouring each word as it fell from Charles Manning's lips, as though her lover were a saint or fiend and she knew not which. Then the old aunt, who had been aroused from her slumbers by the unusual tumult, came, and Charles, placing Mary in her care, kissed the pale cheek of the still frightened girl and bidding her good-night went out into the darkness, where he met, as he knew he would, both the woman in black and Silas Groundwig.

For a moment neither spoke. Charles broke the silence by demanding of Groundwig the paper he had forced Mary Holbrook to sign. Groundwig did not possess the power to resist the demand, but plead the privilege of burning the paper. Manning consented. The document was produced, Charles examined the signature, saw it was in the trembling hand of Mary Holbrook, then lighting a match, set the paper on fire and watched it burn until only a little spot of black ashes and Silas Groundwig's black heart knew the paper's contents.

"Silas Groundwig!" The name was barely whispered—Charles Manning whispered it—but it was one of those whispers that devils might envy the art to utter. "You are in my power; you know it better than I do. I propose now to have a little plain talk with you. You sent me adrift when I was a mere lad, because I was born out of wedlock. This is the first time for many years that I have met you and that woman together. Your wife, Henry Winters' mother, is dead. Your husband, the lying Hickman, who perjured his soul in the will case, has fled from justice and will never return, and besides, your marriage with



him was illegal because he had another wife at the time you married him. I am a justice of the peace. I want you to join hands. Don't hesitate. Don't protest. There is no legal impediment in the way of your marriage. I see you understand me. So, joining hands, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of this State I pronounce you man and wife. This act removes from me all taint of illegitimacy. I can now hold up my head and say to the world, I am a man. Do not go, Silas Groundwig, I have more business with you. You have heard the story of my meeting Henry Winters. Don't start. You need not be afraid of him just yet. You have also learned how I became madly, passionately, insanely in love with Mary Holbrook. Henry Winters has only himself to blame for it. He told to me the story of his love, not only once, but a hundred times, and, as he dwelt upon her charms, her loveliness of person, her beauty of character, it was my fate to love. I could not resist that fate. I swore to marry her. That I might do so I have sacrificed my honor and whatever good name I may have ever had, and all the hope I ever possessed of life beyond the grave. But my love is sincere and pure as mortal ever had for woman. I can not make myself believe otherwise. I have told you before that Henry Winters was dead, and you have rejoiced over it because your life was in his hands should he ever return. Now, Silas Groundwig, let me tell you that Henry Winters lives, and, well don't interrupt me, and pray don't faint, fainting is woman's privilege when shocked, not that of a strong man; hear me through—he will land in New York in

less than a week, and will be here in three days afterward. This vast continent is not big enough for both you and he to live on together. He will hunt you down as the son hunts the assassin of his mother. You and I both have a like interest in preventing him from leaving New York. Ah, I see you comprehend the drift of my remarks. It is well. I see you are willing to undertake the job, and your fruitful mind already has a plan for its accomplishment. But there must be no tragedy unless the drama will not satisfy the audience. You understand me? You are to proceed at once to New York and detain Winters there until after the marriage. The time fixed for that is only ten days distant.

“Mary and I have the sale of our property nearly completed. Immediately upon our marriage we shall make a foreign tour, and in some great city be lost forever, as far as Henry Winters will ever know. I shall be in charge of the telegraph, and you can send your messages to me, and I will risk all publicity. My dispatches will be sent you at the old place, and in the old cipher. You do your part faithfully, which I know you will, as your life depends upon it; and to prove to you that I am your friend, and wish you no ill, I will deposit three thousand dollars to your credit in the Highland Bank, and mail the certificate to your address. Or, if you succeed in the plan you have for keeping Winters in New York until after the wedding, you can return here, and I will pay you the money in person. You know you can trust me. With that sum you and she can go into some mining camp beyond the Rocky mountains,

and, safe from discovery, you can both spend the rest of your days in atoning for your sins."

Groundwig could not conceal the emotion of his feelings during the time Charles was giving him these instructions. He was overcome with the startling intelligence so unexpectedly imparted to him. He was ready for the encounter. He had so great a personal interest in its success that Charles had no fears but the outcome would be all that both could desire.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### I FORGOT. I FORGOT.

Never was disguise more complete. An associate of a lifetime would not know Silas Groundwig as he sat in the office of the steamship company awaiting the arrival of the City of Rome. Two trusty villains were with him. Will they succeed in their hellish scheme? Groundwig is long-headed, adroit and cunning. His plans are not matured. He must act on circumstances as they present themselves, and there is no danger, but he will act quickly and resort to any means to accomplish his purpose. The tugs are coming to the dock with the steamer's passengers. Henry Winters is one of the first to land. He hurriedly calls a cab, gives directions about his baggage, has a moment's conversation with the cabman about a matter which must be private, for he asks his questions in a whisper, is driven to the postoffice, inquires at the general delivery for letters, there are none, he turns pale, looks anxiously about as if to find somebody who will make an explanation, almost totters to the cab, is driven to a jewelry store on Broadway, alights, goes in, and, after a brief conversation with the proprietor, unlocks a hand-bag which he had all along grasped tightly, and exposes to view a rich collection of precious stones, which he desires to dispose of. Groundwig is near by, sees the display, steps out upon the walk, calls a policeman, has a few



words with him in a low voice, nods his head toward Henry inside the store, the officer enters, and, putting his hand on Henry's shoulder, makes him his prisoner.

The valuables are taken possession of by the officer, and Henry is marched to the station house, and the next morning is brought before a magistrate for examination. Groundwig and his assistant villains having been held in custody as witnesses, appear and testify against the young man. Groundwig giving the assumed name of Robert Newcomb, swore that he took passage on the City of Rome, from Liverpool to New York, on its last trip, and when some two days out from the American shore his state-room was entered and the diamonds and other precious stones which the prisoner had offered for sale yesterday were stolen; that the prisoner was a passenger on the same trip and knew the witness had the diamonds in his possession; that upon discovering his loss he suspected the prisoner, but was unable to obtain proof that would warrant his arrest; that he continued to watch the suspected party and called the ship's detective to his assistance; that the two followed the prisoner from the steamship to the post-office, and then to the jeweler's, where the property was taken out of a satchel by the prisoner and was being disposed of to the jeweler when the arrest was made.

"Mr. Newcomb, do you recognize this property as the same that was stolen from you on board the City of Rome?" asked the magistrate.

"I do, your honor," answered Mr. Newcomb.

The detective was sworn and corroborated Newcomb's evidence in every particular. The jeweler testified to the property exposed in court as the same offered to him for sale by the prisoner. The officer swore he arrested the prisoner while in the very act of selling the goods.

"This seems to be a very clear case," said the Magistrate. "Prisoner stand up. What is your name?"

"Henry Winters, if your honor, please," was the answer given in such a pleasant voice and with such a mannerly bow, that the magistrate, the officers and spectators began to look upon the culprit in the dock with more interest than they usually take in such cases.

"Prisoner, have you any witnesses?" asked the Magistrate.

The prisoner, embarrassed and confused, replied: "None, your honor, but I would like to be sworn and tell my story."

The magistrate swore the prisoner, and he commenced by reciting the story of his being kidnapped, shipped on the Lucky Star for India, of the start home, of the shipwreck, landing on the shores of an unknown continent, of his sickness and apparent death, of his restoration to life, of his travels in that vast country, of his search for precious stones and his good luck, of his taking passage on the City of Rome, of his landing in New York on yesterday, his attempt to dispose of some of the stones for ready money, and an unqualified denial that the property belonged to Newcomb.

The magistrate heard the story through. He had

been a magistrate in a big city too long to be influenced by such a narrative. He had heard them before. Turning to the prisoner he remarked, "Young man, your story is altogether too fishy. It won't wash. You are given to romancing. When you get out of this scrape, I advise you to turn an honest man, quit stealing, and go to writing novels. With such a remarkable imagination and with the skill you possess to tell a story so well, you can make more money with your pen than with your burglar tools. The officer will take you back to jail to await the action of the grand jury. If you have friends who will aid you, the bail bond will be put at three thousand dollars."

"Those diamonds, if your honor please, are worth more than that sum. Are they not good security for my appearance, when wanted?" asked the prisoner.

"Young man, are you crazy? Are not those diamonds the property of Mr. Newcomb, and not yours?" responded the justice.

"I forgot, I forgot," said the prisoner.

And the officer marched Henry Winters to jail.

It was no time now to moralize on the wickedness of men. It was no time to conjecture why neither his mother nor Mary had written him, as he had requested in his cable dispatch. Things were too serious, and the present required the perfect control and command of all his faculties. Somebody was plotting, and he was the victim. It might be the continuation of the old conspiracy, or this one might stand alone by itself. No matter. Something must be done, and done quickly. How and what was the puzzling question. His first thought was to send for

some person who knew him. He ran over in his own mind who of his acquaintances might be in New York. He could not call to mind a single person in that great city that knew him or he knew. But stay. There is Captain Bodfish, of the ill-fated "Lucky Star." He lived in New York. He might be in the city now. He could corroborate a good part of the story he had told the magistrate. How to find him was the question. He asked the guard if he knew Captain Bodfish. No, he did not know him, but if Henry wanted him to come to the jail, and would give the street and number where he resided, or did business, he should be sent for at once. Henry knew neither. Look in the directory. Yes, the name of Bodfish is there, and so are several of the same name, and which is the one Henry wants? That information he can not give. Will the jailer send a messenger among the shipping and find out who owned the "Lucky Star" that was wrecked on a foreign coast some two years since? "If the owner's name is ascertained, ask him for the address of the Captain Bodfish who was the master of that ship when it was wrecked. If he can be found, bring him to the jail, and he will soon clear me of this great crime."

Henry's wishes were gratified. A messenger was sent as directed. It was not many hours before Captain Bodfish, who, as luck would have it, had just returned from a sea voyage, was admitted to the jail, and Henry was taken from his cell into the Captain's presence. Henry was overjoyed to see his old friend, and rushing up to him in the most cordial manner, sought to grasp him by the hand, but the Captain



turned aside, and coldly refused to accept the proffered recognition. Henry was dumbfounded. His feelings were hurt to the quick. "What! my old comrade in danger and distress, in suffering and disaster on sea and land, refuse a friendly shake of the hand, when God knows if ever man wanted a friend in need, I want one now!"

"Charles Manning," replied the Captain, "I wish to have nothing to do with you. You deceived me once. You gave me your sacred word when we parted in Boston, that would I loan you money to reach your friends, you would return it to me in a week. From that day to this, I never heard a word from you. I do not know what crime you are charged with, but I warrant you it is stealing, because the mate of the Sober Fritz told me he suspected you of pilfering from him while on board that ship. It is enough for me to know that a man who was my messmate in encountering the dangers and hardships of a fearful shipwreck, violated his word of honor and refused to redeem a pledge to repay the small amount of money I loaned him. I suspect you, too, of a great crime, but as it is only suspicion, I will not name it. You must seek other assistance to aid you, for I will not give you even enough to pay for a night's lodging, though I judge that paying for your lodging is the least of your trouble to-night. Good-bye, Charles Manning."

"Captain Bodfish, hold a moment, for heaven's sake, don't turn away without a chance for me to say a word. I am not Charles Manning, I am Henry Winters!"

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### IS IT CHARLES MANNING OR HENRY WINTERS ?

Captain Bodfish had great difficulty in controlling his feelings. First came the belief that he was being imposed upon in the most wicked manner. Then suddenly would flash into his mind the question, "Suppose he is really Henry Winters?" But the scene in the cabin on that far-away shore came quick with its answer: "Henry Winters is dead." So firmly believing, the Captain replied:

"Go on, sir, with your bare-faced deception and your base and wicked falsehoods as long as you please, but you must talk to others, not to me. I will not listen. You have deceived me once, I tell you. You will never deceive me again. Blackhearted impostor! Expect to soften my heart by representing yourself to be another and he one of the noblest and purest young men that ever lived. Charles Manning, you and I left the dead body of Henry Winters on that distant shore. When I sailed on the Sober Fritz you sailed with me. Together we left the dead with his God. Were you not completely lost to every feeling that makes a friend respect the memory of his dead comrade and messmate, you would sooner call upon these walls to fall and crush your life out of you, than to claim for some vile purpose to be that saint in heaven."

"Captain Bodfish, as God is my judge, and as I

expect to answer some day to Him for every act of my life, I swear to you, and if I swear falsely, I call upon that God to strike me dead here at your feet, that I am Henry Winters."

"Charles Manning, I—"

"Don't, I beg of you, call me by that name again. Turn away if you will, leave me here to the fate that is so mysteriously enveloping me, but don't tell me I am an impostor. I say to you, Captain Bodfish, I am the man that was left for dead in that cabin by the sea. I was poisoned, but by whom I do not know. I was restored to life by the physician's daughter, who gave me the antidote, and would you but listen I would tell you all about my travels before the Sober Fritz came the following year and rescued you and Charles Manning."

"I do not wish to hear you. Don't I know that you and Henry Winters were inseparable, and don't I know that you can tell his story as well as he could tell it himself were he to be raised from the dead? You have the same smooth tongue that captivated the crew on the Sober Fritz, but you must not expect to again charm me with your cunning palaver. Now that you talk of poisoning, let me tell you that on several occasions I have caught myself suspecting you of poisoning young Winters, and I am now more than half inclined to the opinion that the diamonds and other jewels he had laid away so carefully to bring home to his mother and his affianced, were stolen from him by you, and you have just now summoned up courage enough to offer them for sale."

"Captain Bodfish, a thought strikes me. Now do

listen for one moment to what I have to say. You think Henry Winter's jewels were stolen from him by Charles Manning. In that suspicion you do Charles a great wrong. I know nothing about the evidence you may have to base the suspicion that he poisoned Henry Winters, but—"

"No more, I will not listen longer to such trash," said Captain Bodfish.

"Captain Bodfish, one question before you go. Do you remember one day examining those rough diamonds and admiring two of them that were so much alike no one could tell the difference?" asked Henry Winters.

"I do," the Captain answered.

"May I ask another question?" asked Henry Winters, and the young man looked piteously and imploringly into the Captain's face.

"Yes."

"Did Henry Winters insist on your accepting one of those stones as a gift from him?"

"He did," answered Captain Bodfish.

"Can I ask still another question?" inquired Winters.

"Yes, yes; go on; what more?"

"After Henry insisted for some time that you should accept one of the stones, and you persisted in refusing it, did you finally consent to take it?"

"I did, and have it now in its rough state," said Captain Bodfish, "in my necktie, and I presume you have its mate, which would only be additional evidence that you stole Henry Winters' diamonds, and as far as the conversation had at that time is



concerned, what could be more natural than for Henry Winters to tell it all to you?"

Winters was now evidently nonplussed. Every point he could make was being turned against him, and he was almost in despair. Rallying once again to the encounter with his old messmate and friend, he found courage to ask:

"Do you remember the remark you made when you took the gift?"

"I do; it is as fresh in my mind as though the occurrence were but yesterday, and I am not ashamed to repeat it to you. Charles Manning, I said—"

"Stop, Captain Bodfish," cried Winters, "stop, I did not ask you what you said."

"Go on, young man. I rather like your style of questioning. Again I say, I will listen," responded Captain Bodfish.

"Was there any other person present who heard what you said?" asked Winters.

"No, we were in the wilderness, several miles from the village, and we were alone all that day."

"Could Charles Manning have heard that remark?"

Looking confused and seemingly more interested in the conversation than Henry himself, he said, "It was impossible."

Young Winters rose from his chair, stepped close to the captain, and, looking him straight in the eye, exclaimed:

"I will tell you what that remark was. You said, 'Look out for yourself, Henry, or that Indian maiden will steal your heart, and Charles Manning will cut your throat and steal your diamonds.'"

Captain Bodfish stood there immovable as a statue. His face grew pale, then the rush of blood made his cheeks flush and crimson. He was in deep thought, revolving in his mind whether there was any possible way that Charles Manning could have known what was said at that time by him to Henry Winters. The Captain had himself admitted it was impossible. Though a lingering doubt perplexed him and blinded him for a moment, as to the course he ought to pursue, he reached for Henry's hand, shook it cordially, and, almost sobbing, remarked:

“Young man, whether you are Henry Winters or Charles Manning, by the love I bear Henry Winters, be he dead, or be you him, I will befriend you now to the extent of my power.”

The Captain learned that the grand jury was in session, and that Henry's case had already been considered in that peculiar American star chamber, where men are convicted first and tried afterward, and a true bill found against Henry for stealing, in the night time, property valued at seven thousand dollars.

A lawyer was employed to defend Winters. At the trial, which came off immediately, the same positive evidence was introduced as was given before the magistrate, and the jury retired, and in less than ten minutes brought in a verdict of guilty, and the judge sentenced the prisoner to a term of five years in the penitentiary at Sing Sing. Henry had caused dispatches to be sent to his mother and two or three prominent neighbors at Bradford Junction, asking them to come immediately to his assistance, and as no

answers were received, both lawyer and Captain had their faith in the young man's innocence somewhat weakened. The lawyer, however, proposed to unearth what he was beginning to believe was a conspiracy, let the cost be what it might.

Notwithstanding all the circumstances of guilt, Captain Bodfish was sorely perplexed and troubled. If this young man is really Henry Winters he is innocent. There could be no question in the Captain's mind upon the soundness of this conclusion. If he were Charles Manning, then, no doubt, he was justly convicted. The Captain, as he reflected upon the circumstances referred to by his questioner, became more and more convinced that he was no imposter, but was Henry Winters.

Running over in his mind how best to unravel this mystery, the Captain was interrupted by a boisterous tap on his office door. He invited the visitor to walk in. It proved to be a policeman who solicited an interview upon the subject that was uppermost in the Captain's thoughts. Bidding him proceed, the officer without ceremony began at once to impart the following important information to his host: "You appeared in court to-day as the friend of a prisoner charged with stealing diamonds and other precious stones. I was present at the trial and heard all the evidence. The faces of the two witnesses who testified against the young man seemed familiar to me. When they retired from the court-room I followed them. One bought a ticket for a western town. I did not dare to detain him because in his disguise I was afraid he was not my man. His pal, who represented

himself to be the Steamer's detective, I arrested as soon as the train started, and, upon removing his disguise, I recognized him as a successful confidence man, whom I had seen on the streets nearly every day for months, and hence he could not have been on the steamer City of Rome on its last trip to New York, as that arrived on Monday of this week. I searched him, and found upon his person what I should think was the greater part of the property which your friend was charged with stealing. When I made my report to the captain at the police station, I learned that Lawyer Fielding had been informed by your friend that there were three passengers on board the steamer, who had traveled with him from Glasgow to Liverpool, that two of them resided in this city, that they had been found and had visited the prisoner in his cell; had recognized him as their traveling companion, and would testify that while in Glasgow the prisoner had exhibited to them the identical diamonds he was charged with stealing, and had asked their advice as to whether London or New York would be the best place to dispose of them.

The Captain listened with the most eager attention. He was now aroused and in earnest. There was no longer any doubt of Henry Winter's identity. Calling a cab, the Captain was driven to the lawyer's office. A hasty conference was held. It was resolved to make application to the governor for a pardon for young Winters, and to this end the confidence man who had signified his willingness to make a clean breast of the whole transaction as far as he knew the facts, and the two fellow-travelers,



both of whom were reputable citizens residing in the city, were taken before the executive who heard the proof of the young man's innocence, and after carefully examining the record of the case, and sending for the district attorney, who had appeared in the trial for the State, promised to decide on the application on the morrow. The evidence was so clear that Henry had been made the victim of a conspiracy to rob him, that the governor did not hesitate to grant the pardon.

Captain Bodfish, overcome with joy, rushed to the jail and thrusting the pardon in Henry's face, threw his arms round his neck, and wept like a child.

The jewels found on the confidence man were ordered restored to Henry. These, with the exception of two or three of the choicest ones, he disposed of for cash, and first sending two messages, one to his mother and another to Mary, announcing his intention to leave New York that night for Bradford Junction, he purchased a ticket, bade the Captain a most affectionate good-bye, and was once again homeward bound.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### SHALL THE IMPOSTOR SUCCEED?

On the afternoon of the second day after leaving New York, Henry reached the junction where he was to change cars for Bradford. Much to his disappointment, he found the train he should take was four hours late, so he seated himself in the depot to pass away the time as best he might. The newsboys were crying the morning papers, published in a neighboring city, and he bought one. Running over its columns to find something of interest, his eye was attracted to the headlines, "Romantic marriage." A glance at the text of the article and instantly his mind grasped the extraordinary intelligence that at six o'clock, near the village of Bradford Junction, Henry Winters would wed Mary Holbrook! For a moment the buildings, the cars, the people passed before his vision in a circle and like lightning. He may have swooned. It was but for a moment. The bystanders opened the windows, unloosed his garments, and he immediately recovered his consciousness. Upon reviving, it took him but a second to comprehend the entire situation. It passed before him like a swiftly moving panorama, and he recognized all the characters. In the foreground was Charles Manning, a hideous impostor, who had made use of the story of Henry's life and Henry's love, and with Mary's picture and Mary's letters,

which he had stolen, encouraged by the terrible similarity of likeness of the two men, had played a game so damnable as to make angels weep, and had won. Great God! had won! Won his Mary! He cared not to look again to see the other parties to this terrible picture. He knew the next to appear would be Mary Holbrook. And he knew she was innocent. In his whole soul there was not a breath of censure against that pure creature. Though she might keep step in the shadow of a demon, she was spotless. But ring down the curtain. Moments may be ages if not now turned to proper account. His first impulse was to telegraph—telegraph to his mother, to Mary, to his neighbors, to anybody, everybody he ever knew, and tell them all to stop the marriage ceremony. But he remembered that not a dispatch or letter he had sent to his home had been answered. The villain was intercepting letters and messages, and it were folly to expect to accomplish anything by the telegraph. He asked for assistance. Half a dozen bystanders responded. They see he is in deep trouble. "One of you go for the superintendent of the west division of this road and bring him here—go quick, quick, quick. I have not strength this moment to walk. I will be strong soon." In a few moments Colonel Mason, the superintendent, came in. Henry feels that everything now depends upon his ability to compose himself and explain the situation. Railroads don't listen to mad men. With the newspaper in his hand, he coolly commences to read the article to the astonished superintendent. It is full of the strangest romance, for it relates in

detail the kidnapping, the voyage to India, the shipwreck, the return, the marriage to take place on the lawn at the bride's home, that invitations had been given out to several hundred people and that the afternoon—that afternoon—would be a gay holiday for the farmers for miles around. The reading finished, the superintendent looked at Henry in bewildered amazement and awaited an explanation. "Mr. Superintendent, may God strike me dead if I don't tell the truth. I am Henry Winters, and a villain that poisoned me, and thought he had murdered me, is the man that is to marry my Mary at six o'clock! Merciful heavens! it is now three o'clock, and Henry Winters is to marry Mary Holbrook at six o'clock, and Henry Winters himself is 115 miles away! Mr. Mason, I must have a locomotive to take me to Bradford Junction before six o'clock, and here is the money to pay for it. Take from that roll of bills whatever amount you think right." The spectators shouted approval of this demand. The excitement was at a fever pitch. Not the least of the excited ones was Colonel Mason himself. He quickly determined that he would comply with the young man's request for a special, and, giving an order to one of his assistants, he declared he would put Henry Winters into Bradford station before six o'clock, come what might, and let the consequences be what they would. All his orders were quickly responded to. He would have the locomotive ready first and immediately, and trust to luck to get his orders from headquarters before starting. The track was ordered cleared of all trains; the locomotive came puffing up



in excellent trim, with plenty of water, plenty of fuel and ready for the race. Henry climbed into the cab and sat down on the engineer's seat, and the superintendent, who proposed to make one of the party, took a seat in front of the fireman. Just then the train-dispatcher came forward with the order from the general office, and the superintendent giving the signal, at three-thirty, the locomotive responded to the open throttle, and fairly trembled and shook its great, big, iron sides as it gave a lunge ahead, and, amid the deafening cheers of the crowd, it got right down to work that made the engineer proud of his noble steed.

The mile posts were passed as though they were telegraph poles. Screeching like mad through the villages, fairly leaping over switches, shaking, roaring, puffing, whirling over bridges, through fields and forests, faster and faster, a steady, sturdy hand at the lever, stout and sinewy arms at the furnace, watchful eyes gazing eagerly beyond the smoke-stack and scanning the track to see if all were clear, the faithful, obedient and trusty locomotive bent down to its duty and performed it as though it were a living, breathing being and comprehended fully the responsibility entrusted to it.

Henry spoke not a word. His whole being kept pace with the engine in its nervous tremor and apparent agitation. In fact, no one uttered a syllable except the superintendent, who, with his watch in his hand, at intervals called out the time, the speed and the distance run. Fifteen miles, twenty minutes! Twenty-five miles, thirty minutes! Forty-five miles,

forty-eight minutes! Sixty miles, sixty-one minutes! The superintendent was now as excited as the engine itself. Henry sat there as though carved out of stone. The engineer and fireman were as happy as though they owned the road. Fifty-five miles more and eighty-nine minutes to make it in. The track passed the Holbrook farm within sixty rods of the house. So there would be no delay in getting from the station to the lawn, where the marriage ceremony was to take place.

Seventy miles in seventy-two minutes! Losing a little, Mr. Fireman, can't you throw in an extra lump or two of those choice pieces there at your feet? Saving them for the last? Save nothing. Crowd in all the fuel she will take. Open the throttle a little wider, if possible, Mr. Engineer. Can't do it? No matter, she is behaving beautifully. What a splendid creature! Now she just flies. The last five miles was made in four minutes. Ninety miles in a few seconds less than ninety minutes. Twenty-five miles more and a full hour to do it in. That is a splendid margin to go on. Will make it in time with half an hour to spare. Don't move a finger there to reduce her speed, Mr. Engineer. Let her do all she can. Take no risks. Better have the time to spare at the end of the run than on the road. A mile a minute is now her pace, and she is buckling down to that speed with ease. Heavens, don't she round that curve handsomely!

The engineer sees something ahead that alarms him. Is it a puff of smoke? He stretches his neck out of the cab window as far as possible, strains his

eyes, hastily draws back, clutches the lever with both hands, ready to close the throttle on a moment's warning. Another second and the steam is shut off, the engine reversed, the brakes applied, the noble steed lothfully lessens its speed, and, turning an abrupt curve, comes to a dead stop within three or four feet of a bridge whose timbers are smoking from an explosion of gunpowder, which some miscreant had applied, no doubt, in order to prevent the engine from reaching Bradford Junction.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### CLEAR THE TRACK TO BRADFORD JUNCTION!

No sooner had Groundwig departed on his mission of crime than Manning set himself to prosecuting plans for his marriage and bridal tour with renewed activity. His first thought was to persuade Mary to name an earlier day for the nuptials, and to this end to assign as a reason a dispatch from some foreign mercantile house, offering him a splendid position with a large salary, provided he could report for duty at a certain day, naming a time that would require his departure within three or four days. He concluded he could not give Mary such a reason for consenting to change the day fixed for the wedding without danger of exciting her suspicions that all was not right, so he would trust Groundwig.

Mary and several of her intimate friends suggested that the wedding should be at 6 o'clock in the afternoon, that it should be made a gala day as far as possible, and that the invitations should be general and the ceremony public. It was arranged that the beautiful lawn in front of the house should be the place, and the Episcopal clergyman, in charge of the church at the county seat, should be invited to solemnize the marriage.

Mary and her assistants at once began making preparations for the great event. The wedding trousseau was selected, and nimble fingers fashioned



and fitted the bride's gown. It was white silk, without trimmings or decorations or ornaments of any kind. Arrayed in white, she was her prettiest, and in white she looked the more the bride.

The day arrived. It was one of the loveliest days in June. In and around the Holbrook homestead, from early morn, all was confusion, and everybody about the premises was on the stir, crowding and pushing and trying to help do something. Mary had retired to her chamber, and, assisted by her dressing maid, proceeded to arrange her toilet. This pleasing and exciting task completed, and the compliments of the bride's maids lavishly bestowed upon her, she asked to be left alone until time to proceed to the altar.

During the days the prospective bride and her friends had been making these preparations, Manning had by no means been idle. With him they were days of excitement, fear, doubt and rejoicing, and almost the last moments were moments of inexpressible anxiety, overwhelming him with apprehensions of the greatest possible evil.

He first learned of Henry's arrival in New York by the receipt, as operator, of the two messages Henry had sent his mother and Mary. These dispatches were quickly destroyed. Then Groundwig had conveyed to him the glad tidings of Henry's conviction of grand larceny and the five years' sentence to hard labor in the penitentiary. Such glorious news almost made his heart burst with joy. Five years assured him in which to bask in Mary Holbrook's love without fear or danger of his great crime being discovered. Groundwig would no doubt hasten back to

receive in person the promised reward. The money would be ready for him, and never would money be more cheerfully paid to him who earned it.

Things were surely running smoothly now, thought Charles Manning. Had he the arranging of them, they could not have been more to his liking. The morning came. With the going down of the sun all his plans would be consummated. His successor had been named to take charge of the telegraph office, and his employers were complimenting Manning on so closely attending to business as to insist on remaining at his post until the afternoon of his wedding. Charles Manning knew too well the importance of controlling the wires until the last moment. He did not intend to let go any of his resources until they were all exhausted or until there could be no occasion for using them.

Running over in his mind, in a half-dreaming manner, the thrilling events of the past year, he was aroused by the click, click, click, of the instrument before him. The name of Silas Groundwig comes clicking over the wires. The operator starts as though shot. What person in New York is telegraphing Groundwig? Even the message itself does not answer the question. Nor does Manning care who the sender is. The dispatch itself is of the most startling character. It comes like the lightning from a cloudless sky. It may be the climax of the whole revolting scheme. Not a word of it is put on paper. But every syllable is burned into Manning's very soul:

Governor pardoned that fellow on the tenth, and he went West on the express the same night.

YANKEE TIM.

Manning's brain worked fast and keen. A hasty glance at the time table, a quick scanning of the column of figures, and it was clear to see that unless something happened or was made to happen, and that, too, at once, Winters would reach Bradford Junction a full hour before the time fixed for the marriage ceremony to take place.

Now, then, where was Groundwig? His services were needed now, as they were never needed before. The morning express was due in a few minutes. Groundwig must be on that. In another minute the train pulled in and pulled out, and Groundwig was the only passenger that alighted. A whispered conference was held between the two, and while talking, Manning's quick ear caught enough of a dispatch that was going over the wires to make him yell with delight. "Groundwig!" exultingly exclaimed Manning, "God in heaven approves my acts. The next west-bound train has met with an accident, and will be at least four hours late. That train is the one Winters must connect with at White Creek Junction. I shall be married and on the south-bound train, and fifty miles away before he can reach this station. Who says now that fortune don't favor the brave, no matter what they do, if their conscience approves their acts?"

"Groundwig, I have won on every side. Mary Holbrook once my wife I will be to her such a devoted, loving, faithful husband she shall never have cause to think she has been deceived. I will be her slave. Yea, I will die for her. If necessary, I will die to keep her from marrying another. But enough of

- this. Meet me here in an hour and I will have the money for you that I promised. There comes the purchaser of my farm for the deed; he brings the purchase price with him. Go now, and come at the hour named."

The trade was completed, the money paid, and Manning, jumping into his buggy, drove to the Holbrook place, where he met Mary who appeared somewhat depressed, but in the excitement he paid little attention to it, and telling her the sale of his farm had been consummated, that all the preparations were made for the bridal tour, that the south-bound train was reported on time, he hurried back to meet his engagement with Groundwig.

The new operator was now in charge of the station. Groundwig, disguised and hideous was there impatient and nervous. Manning came in hurried and excited. He handed his faithful accomplice a roll of bank bills in full satisfaction of all services rendered; and as he turned to leave, the operator remarked as though telling an item of ordinary news that the road was just ordered clear of all trains for a special.

Manning, excitedly and confusedly.—“How far is the line to be cleared.”

Operator.—“To this station.”

Manning.—“A freight or passenger?”

Operator.—“Neither. A locomotive and tender.”

Manning.—“When does it start?”

Operator.—“This moment—three-thirty.”

Not another word was said. Groundwig had been an attentive listener to every word. He understood



well what it all meant. More villainy for him. More labor of love to appease his own hate. Both men stepped out upon the platform. "Clear the track to Bradford Junction" rung in Manning's ears like a funeral dirge at a wedding. The most ominous words of all that had passed over the wires since this bold conspiracy was set on foot. A special for Henry Winters, and at that moment it must be whirling westward at its greatest possible speed. At this last hour should he, Charles Manning, be foiled and cheated of the hand of her he loved better than life? Never! There is still one more chance. Now then, for the most desperate means to meet the most desperate case.

"Groundwig, for God's sake get your brains to working quick—quicker than ever before! That is Henry Winters' special. Yes, I know you know it, and I know you know already what I am going to propose. That special will make a mile a minute. In the store-room you will find a saw, an auger and a hatchet. Put them in one of those bags. I will hand you a package of giant powder. Number 4 has orders to run to Bingham, twelve miles, and side-track for special—that's her whistle, quick now, not a second to spare; go to Hilton Run, a mile this side of Bingham—you know the bridge at the end of that sharp curve, the freight will be slowing up there, so you will have no trouble in getting off, bore a hole—jump aboard—blow the bridge to"—and the train and Groundwig were on their way to Bingham.

Groundwig was faithful to the last. He did his work well. He had a full hour in which to do his

job. He first cut the wires in two different places. The bridge was on the bottom, quite a high elevation of land on one side, and thick woods on the other, so there was no danger of being discovered in his nefarious work. He would not be interrupted by trains, for none could move in either direction until the special had passed. When all was ready he set fire to the fuse, and almost before the smoke had cleared away the locomotive rounded the curve, slowed up, and stopped within a few feet of the wrecked bridge. The miscreant who had done the deed was seen to plunge into the forest and disappear. The engine was run back to the station, the alarm given, and, under the lead of the superintendent, a posse well armed, and several men mounted on horseback, started in pursuit of the would-be murderer. The chase was a short one. The desperado was soon surrounded, and, as he drew a revolver to intimidate his pursuers and resist arrest, half a dozen guns were leveled at his head, and Silas Groundwig, with all his deep, black crimes on his soul, gave up the ghost.

The moment Groundwig had boarded the train, Manning felt that the last obstacle in the pathway to the hand of his betrothed had been overcome. He felt he could trust Groundwig to do that work, and do it effectually. From his standpoint he had fought against fearful odds, had contended against a battalion of fates, and at last was victorious.

All day long startling incidents had followed one after the other with painful rapidity, and now was come the trying event of all. He at once arranged

his toilet with excellent taste and the utmost care, and when completed to his pleasure, he looked every inch the happiest of bridegrooms. His wonderful will-power had enabled him to conceal all outward evidence of his excessive nervous excitement, which would have exhausted that power, and prostrated even a stronger man, had not the prize been the hand of a Mary Holbrook.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE RACE AND THE RESCUE.

Hardly had the engine commenced to slacken its speed, as it approached the smoking bridge, when Henry leaped to the ground, and in a moment was examining the extent of the damage. He saw the stringers were so weakened that it would be impossible to run the engine over. Quickly comprehending what must be done, Henry started on a rapid run for a farm-house on a hill, about one hundred rods distant. It took him but a few moments to reach it. In the yard he met the owner of the farm. The two recognized each other at once. "God in Israel! Holy Moses, Henry Winters, what on earth are you doing here?" was the familiar and astonished salutation. "Are you mad? Fleeing from a bride that only wants wings to be an angel. Henry Winters, in the name of——"

"Stop, for heaven's sake, stop and hear me," said Henry. "I want a horse; the fleetest one in your stable. I want it quick. Not a second to lose. The man who is now leading Mary Holbrook to the altar is a villain and a black-hearted scoundrel. He is not Henry Winters. I must get there before the ceremony or——"

By this time Farmer Dickson was dancing all over the yard. He was too excited to be of any help. "Hallo there, Hank, go and bring out the little gray



—Sam, for the love of all the saints, put a saddle—Jane, Wife, Molly, come out here and help, quick, quick; 'taint Henry Winters that's being—; good Lord, I forgot, every blessed one of them have gone to the wedding. Take any horse you want. They are all good ones; hitch up—” But Henry was not listening; he had heard very little the old gentleman said; he had rushed into the stable, put a saddle and bridle on the only horse there, and was just mounting when Farmer Dickson yelled out, “Give him the reins; let him have his own way; he is the fastest horse in the county. Don't be afraid to let him jump. Nervy Jim never yet lost a race, and by the eternal heavens he won't lose this one—stars and snakes see him go”—and before the honest old farmer had finished his exciting instructions to the rider, Nervy Jim was a mile away, leaping astonishingly long strides, gathering himself at each jump as though his limbs were steel springs and plunging ahead like the swift wind, the noble brute seeming to understand that it was no common race he was making that day.

Nervy Jim doubled himself right down to work. His big nostrils were extended wide and broad, his beautiful neck was stretched straight out from his lithe body, as if he expected to win the race by passing under the wire only a hand's breadth ahead of time; his mane and tail stood out full length with the wind, and ere half the distance was made, the white foam completely encircled his black body. It was ten miles ride from Farmer Dickson's house. When the bold rider mounted his steed he had twenty-six

minutes to make the distance. The best he expected to do was to reach the scene of the festivities before the ceremony was finished. Nervy Jim needed no urging. He was doing his best, and Henry felt that was enough, if no mishaps overtook him. Farm houses were passed, but they were deserted. One little village was reached, and not a soul was seen. Everybody was at the wedding, except the bridegroom. On yonder rise, in plain sight, was the school-house, and a little farther on was the church building, but the daring rider saw neither; his eyes were strained to catch the first sight of scenes beyond.

The horse and rider may safely be left to proceed alone to the Holbrook farm. The reader can reach there first, and just in time to note the completion of the out-door arrangements for the wedding festivities. The trees which line the lawn are festooned with wreaths of prairie flowers, fruit blossoms and gaily-colored ribbons. Two parallel banks of flowers, a few feet apart, and running the entire length of the lawn, mark the boundaries of the green aisle along which the bride must pass to reach the altar. The altar is a raised platform, over which, and high enough for a person to stand upright, is a covering made of branches of trees and wreaths of evergreens, and the sides are bedecked with flowers, surrounded with a dense thicket of hot-house plants. On either side the aisle rough seats have been placed, and these are now occupied by the guests, who have come from far and near to witness the marriage ceremony and participate in the wedding festival. It is a gay throng, a merry, laughing, chatting gathering of hard-working, industrious people.

Inside the house there seems but little stir for such an hour. There is a quietness unnatural, more like preparations for a funeral, than a marriage. Better a funeral now than a wedding. The bride's maids have been ready for half an hour. They, too, partake somewhat of the sombre surroundings. They know not why. There is a mysterious something constantly suggesting anything but gayety and cheerfulness. The laughter and merriment of the guests without sound harshly upon the ears of the maids, and yet when could laughter and merriment be more appropriate than now? The more intimate friends, who have assisted in the preparations for the ceremony and the wedding feast, notice the gloom which possesses everything and everybody, and they feel it should be removed if possible. But who can do it? None know how it came, from whence it came, or why it came. Will the light come at last? Will the dark veil be lifted, that the sunshine which is hidden behind it may be revealed? Can Mary Holbrook do it? No. She is shackled with ropes of steel and powerless as an infant. She is disturbed and distressed, but she attributes it to the excitement of the important event she is soon to be a party to. On bended knees she asks for divine assistance. If the dead are permitted to look down upon the scenes of this earth, and can influence human conduct, she asks her mother, her father, and Henry's mother, to guide and direct her steps. With faith in the Divinity, trusting the spirits of the dead will point out the right way, if so be she is tempted to take the wrong one, she prepares to complete her toilet and calls her maid from the adjoining room.

Do not make such haste, sweet Mary Holbrook. Those orange blossoms well become that fair brow. But they need re-arranging. They conceal too much of that beautiful forehead. Perhaps it were well its whiteness should be shaded by the tinge of yellow that clings so closely to both forehead and blossoms. That is a pretty veil—so snowy white, so rich, so rare. It may be admired even though the wedding guests are waiting. That pretty rosebud well becomes its place so near the heart. Now all is ready. Ready? Why this agitation? Why that flushed cheek? A moment since it was pale and white as the spotless gown that robes the fairest of maidens. It must be the fresh air that the gentle breeze has stirred up without. Don't seek to hide those blushes, Mary Holbrook, they become you as virtue becomes an angel. God's pure air is a great physician, it may strengthen you now when you need strength the most.

As Mary steps upon the greensward and comes in plain view of the multitude of friends who have come to make merry at her wedding, a murmur of delight reaches her ears. They are captivated by her beauty—always beautiful, but now more beautiful than ever. Alone she walks up the green aisle, the handiwork of nature and loving hands. Her path is bedecked with the flowers of early summer. Following a short distance come the maids, who, with bowed heads, keep even pace with the prospective bride. Go slow, Mary Holbrook, you follow no one; for some wise purpose you lead; lead ever so slowly, and even then you may lead too fast. There are times when it were better



for a bride to be late at the altar than precisely on time. There are marriage festivals when the happiness of a lifetime may be wrapped up in delay. Go a little slower now, dear girl, perhaps the mist you see through that thin veil may be lifted, and float away forever, if your slow footsteps move slower still. It may be that your heavy heart, heavy when, if ever in life, it should be light, and heavy from no revealed cause, may be relieved of its burden, if you should stop and rest even for a moment; moments now are more precious than jewels. You are in the hands of Divinity. His holy angels should direct you wisely. That faltering step, that surfeit of low spirits, that depressed condition of body and soul are God's signals telling you that he has not forsaken the innocent and pure. Yonder the bridegroom cometh. Take his outstretched hand. There may be strength there for both. The holy man of God breaks the silence:

“Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony.”

“A little too rapid, reverend sir, is your utterance of these solemn words.” It seemed as though a messenger, invisible, whispered those words in the aged preacher's ears. For he continued more slowly and more solemnly with the beautiful service:

“Into this holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak or else hereafter forever hold his peace.”

With this last word came a rumbling sound from a distance, and so strange was it and so sudden did it break upon the ears of the multitude, that all were disturbed for a moment, and all became earnestly interested in knowing the cause. The minister's hand trembled and his book came near falling to the ground. What was it? The sound came nearer and nearer. It was evidently the clatter of horses' hoofs on the hard prairie road, caused by some tardy farmer hastening to the wedding feast. The holy man continued :

“I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of ye know of any impediment why ye may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, ye do now confess it.”

These words caused the expected bridegroom to rock to and fro like a reed in the gale. His face turned white as the bridal veil that almost touched his pallid cheeks. Only nerves of iron kept him on his feet. The clattering hoofs on one side, the meaning of which he could not fail to understand, and the solemn warning of the preacher on the other, filled his soul with the utmost terror.

“Henry, wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep ——” and then the subdued confusion became intensely oppressive. The people were on their feet, and every eye was turned in the direction of the rapidly nearing

horse and rider. The noble animal was on the swiftest gallop, the rider was waving his arms in the air and urging the horse to increased speed. The preacher raised his eyes from the book—stopped reading—looked perplexed and annoyed at the apparent discourteous interruption, and was about to proceed with the ceremony, when the tumult became so uproarious and the excitement so intense, bordering on an uncontrollable panic, that he closed the book and gave his support to the bride, just in time to prevent her falling.

There was no time to ask questions or answer them. That rider on that steed, and those outstretched arms—what could it all mean? There was even no time to think what it meant. The clattering hoofs on the hard ground sounded to the astonished ears of the assemblage as though a cavalcade of untamed steeds were racing for life. The rider caught sight of the stars and stripes floating in the breeze, and now his voice could be heard—was he cheering the flag, or was he mad? The excited spectators instinctively divided and made a passage for horse and stranger. The rider draws tight the reins; the faithful animal, white with foam, stops at the bidding. The horseman leaps from the saddle, rushes through the bank of flowers, hurries along the path where a few moments before the prospective bride had walked, and, loudly exclaiming, “I forbid the bans, I am Henry Winters, that man is an impostor!” reached the improvised altar just in time to receive in his arms the fainting form of Mary Holbrook.

The confusion now was more intense than ever.

A few persons nearest the altar had heard the words of the stranger, and quickly comprehending the meaning, explanations were made for all to hear, and what bade fair to be a serious panic, gave way to the most unbounded enthusiasm. The crowd gave cheer after cheer, hats were thrown in the air, handkerchiefs waved, and amid these demonstrations of rejoicing, Mary Holbrook, restored to consciousness, was assisted into the house, and Charles Manning, taking advantage of the noisy evidence of his rival's popularity, walked out of the crowd, hastened to the stable near by, saddled and bridled a horse, mounted him and rode swiftly in the direction of the setting sun. Reaching a neighboring town, he disposed of his horse and a few personal effects, and, joined by the woman in black, the two, mother and son, sought to hide themselves in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains. They subsequently laid claim, through an attorney, to the money found on Groundwig's person, but as it was proven to be the proceeds of the fraudulent sale of the Winters' homestead, the money was ordered restored to the purchaser.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A RETROSPECT—A MARRIAGE—THE WHITE LIGHT.

“If we only knew how to live as well as we know how to love, we would live and love forever, do you not think so, Henry?” was Mary Holbrook’s inquiry of her lover, a few weeks after the scenes occurred which are recorded in the previous chapter. There was no verbal answer. None was needed or expected. Perfect bliss once more took possession of their hearts, and not even a flickering spark that could be fanned into a doubt came to disturb their happiness.

Weeks passed in telling the story of each other’s lives, during the separation. Both were eloquent listeners and both were eloquent talkers, and both had volumes to tell and volumes to listen to.

Henry, upon visiting his mother’s grave, found that loving hands had kept the mound green and the summer flowers in bloom. With his head bowed upon the little white monument, Henry stood there alone, except as the spirit of a sainted mother may impress its presence on a loving son—and wept. Memory was busy. The past came plodding slowly along, loaded with a mother’s prayers and tears, with a mother’s hopes and fears, but revealing neither sign of distrust nor a whisper of losing faith in God, nor want of confidence in the honor and integrity of her son. No rebuke, no censure, no blame, but a pure and holy trust in heaven’s justness and mercy hal-

lowed the noble woman's memory. Henry felt that in no act of his was laid the seeds of remorse, nor cause for a single wound to have ever made his mother's heart bleed, nor a single pang of ingratitude to have made her shed a tear.

The son read and re-read the thrilling narrative his mother had written, and he saw that where there might have been a spot or a blemish on her character, her story had removed every stain and destroyed every taint. Her life had been pure and noble and brave. A monster—in law the husband and the father—seeking a revenge he had no cause to seek, had followed her through all her life of womanhood to her death-bed, and even there had planned for his vengeance to follow her into the very presence of her Maker. Justice, with its avenging arm, came quickly and thwarted the miscreant's plans, exposed all his infamies, and gave him a few clods of clay to cover his crimes and keep them from smelling to heaven. The other—the treacherous imposter and cunning knave—went, none knew or cared whither; perhaps, in some mountain gulch he may be cursing his conscience for leading him to barter his soul for a life of infamy. He learned too late that conscience is one's own self, and can neither be credited with good nor charged with evil, except as that good or evil comes from the heart.

Henry pondered with the deepest interest over the picture portrayed so vividly by his dying mother. He did not believe it overdrawn, or the colors unnatural. Call it revelation. Call it supernatural. It was no dream. It was not entirely the offspring of the

imagination. It was no delusion. It was an impression forced on Mrs. Winters' mind, when virtually in the presence of her Creator, that all she pictured was in store for the farmers and laboring men whenever they should unite in favor of tariff reform.

One evening after things had become somewhat settled on the Winters' farm, three or four neighbors called to discuss with Mr. Winters a few points connected with the operation of the tariff.

"Do you think," remarked Mr. Scott, "that the cause of the abandonment of so many farms in the Eastern and Middle States is due to the tariff?"

"No doubt of it, to a certain extent, directly or indirectly," replied Mr. Winters. "But what an unanswerable argument are those desolate fields, and ancestral buildings going to decay, to the claim that protection insures a home market for home produce! The greatest desolation is almost within shouting distance of the greatest manufacturing centers. The smoke from many a tall factory chimney casts tortuous shadows on farms and houses gone to waste, not because the soil was exhausted or the State depopulated, but because the farmers could not grow food in competition with the cheap labor of Europe and Asia, and submit to the price of that food being fixed in Liverpool, and at the same time be compelled to buy the necessaries of life at home at the high price fixed by protection.

"The desolation and decay so rapidly increasing in the farming regions of the East, stands, in a measure, as the handiwork of protection. Like causes produce like effects. If the farmers of the West per-

mit their fears to be quieted by the promise that dotting the prairies with factories, and bringing a home market to the door of the producer, will increase the price of farm produce, or increase its purchasing power, they can not shut their eyes to the fact that, under the same condition of things, there is now going on in one portion of this country a general abandonment of cultivated farms and a general decay of farm buildings."

"Still, I do not know," remarked Farmer Lake, "except in the extent of the waste, that the abandonment of Eastern farms is any worse than burning corn in the West—having reference to the fact that when corn is used for fuel, the farmer must sell it at less than the cost of production."

"The result in time," replied Mr. Scott, "will be the same, unless a remedy is found, not because corn is being used for fuel, but because corn, which ranks second in value of any crop grown, has no adequate market."

"The only remedy, then, is to find a market, is it not?" asked Mr. Winters. "There is but one other remedy suggested, and that is for the farmers to agree to raise less corn and less pork, and that remedy every farmer will plainly see is impracticable. It is the remedy offered in the interest of protection, and is a delusion and a snare."

"But where and how will you find a market?"

"I will tell you what I think about it," replied Mr. Winters. "In the first place, I don't believe that over-production is the cause of the low price of corn. Corn is the cheapest and healthiest food



the soil produces. Its value as an article of food is comparatively unknown outside of America. Were the restrictions put on trade by the tariff removed, corn and corn meal would be shipped wherever people could be found who eat wholesome food, and who are civilized enough to offer something they make or grow or find in the ground or the sea in exchange for food.

“When the manufacturer leans on his own resources, as he will in a great measure when the protective features of the tariff are withdrawn, and no longer becomes the object of government charity, he will grow rich by selling his wares in all the markets of the world, and the ship that carries his goods will make up a part of its cargo with American corn.

“For the farmers to admit as correct the theory of the agricultural department at Washington, that the low price of corn is due to overproduction, and to act on that theory, and undertake to restrict the bushels to be raised each year to a certain fixed number, would only add to the depression everywhere prevailing in the farm industry, and result disastrously to every interest depending largely on the food supply.

“The growth of wheat in this country has quite reached the limit. The world’s increase will be largely in Asia, where labor is cheaper than in any other portion of the globe. But corn on this continent has no limit in sight. Nor has America any serious competitor in growing corn. Put corn, and the meat corn produces, within reach of the people who want

such food and are able to buy it, and the capacity of this country to supply the demand will be tested to the uttermost, and the nation that furnishes the product will have much to say about fixing the price. No farmer should be discouraged at corn being used for fuel as long as the odious tariff system prevents his exchanging that corn throughout the world for such commodities of use and value as the world may have to give in exchange for it. Modify that system to the extent it stands for protection, and the decadence in growing corn, now threatened, will cease, and the one grain crop which America can control will again become king. The fittest will survive. If the fittest be the high tariff, the high tariff will live. If it be corn, the corn will continue to be the great crop of the West. Whichever it shall be it is for the farmers and wage-earners to determine."

"Sound to the very core," remarked Farmer Lake, "and I am satisfied the farmers are aroused to the necessity of pulling together and testing the remedy offered by tariff reform, for the decline of agriculture. Only last evening the president of our alliance announced himself a tariff reformer. He was cheered to the echo. He has all along been a protectionist, and the applause indicated that the alliance was composed almost entirely of tariff reformers, although the political parties are about equally represented. Our president in announcing his conversion said he had been studying the conditions which made it possible for these vast trusts, syndicates, combinations and monopolies to increase so rapidly and succeed so prosperously, and he found

that almost invariably the combination was formed on some business or industry that was highly protected, and the first thing it did after dividing its watered stock among its members, was to raise the price of the goods dealt in by the trust, and as the farmers and laborers are the largest consumers of necessaries, they have to stand the larger share of the raise. The tariff answers the purpose of capital, thus making the government a partner in all these trusts, and a party to robbing its own people.

“During the evening a resolution was introduced, suggesting that the alliance and farmers’ clubs join in a fight on the twine combination, and the president moved there be added the three thousand other articles on which there was a tax, and make the fight on all of them, and not select twine as the special object of our warfare, just because we were able to see that the high price of twine, made possible only because the tariff prevented the manufacturer from procuring cheap raw material from abroad, increased the cost of harvesting grain. There are hundreds of articles, he said, that much more need looking after by the farmers, and much more affect the cost of harvesting, than binding twine. Strike at all of them, and spare none”

---

Once again the Holbrook mansion is the scene of preparations for a wedding. The change is marked and pleasing. To-day Mary Holbrook is her real, lovely self again. No tears, no sad thoughts, no despondency, but all is the cheerfulness which so well

becomes the maiden on her bridal day. The same maids attend her. They are full of animation and glee. No muffled tread about the house. All are as merry as light hearts can make merriment.

On the lawn the former order of things is being restored. Flowers, garlands, festoons and wreaths are replaced so as to give the same appearance as on that day the fatal mistake came so nearly being made. It is a gala day, too, for the entire neighborhood, far and near. From every direction the invited guests are coming, laughing, chatting, frolicking and even boisterous in their merriment. The large lawn is being taxed to the uttermost to accommodate the happy throng. Captain Bodfish has come from his Eastern home and is made a hero. The part he played in the strange eventful scenes detailed in these chapters is known to everybody on the ground, and he is showered with compliments and blessings.

Just as the bride and groom elect are passing out the door-way, the shrill whistle of a locomotive breaks in on the stillness, and soon the iron horse, gayly trimmed with flowers and smilax and golden rod and an hundred flags floating in the breeze, appears in sight, sweeping along with a mile-a-minute speed, and comes to a stop within a few rods of the crowd of enthusiastic spectators. Three men alight and move quickly toward the scene of the festivities. Though their coming is a surprise to Henry, he at once recognizes them as the division superintendent and engineer and fireman who played such an important part in foiling the scheme of the bold imposter. As Henry steps forward, meeting them



with a most cordial welcome, the assembled crowd comprehend who the new comers are, and the welkin rings again and again with cheer upon cheer for the railroad visitors, not forgetting a tiger for the noble engine. In another moment clattering hoofs attract the attention of the throng, and the well-known form of Nervy Jim, ridden by Farmer Dickson, comes in sight, and is halted in the very midst of the crowd, where he is received with enthusiastic delight.

This time the marriage ceremony is finished, and the holy man of God pronounces Henry Winters and Mary Holbrook man and wife.

---

The Winters' farm continues to be a popular resort for the farmers of the neighborhood. They congregate there to discuss the great question of tariff reform—the question which they believe involves the fate of the farming industry of the land. They realize the fact that the way out of the depression which is so imperiously invading their homes and so surely entwining them in its coils, is to place tariff reform above party, and keep it there until all that the friends of the reform claim for it becomes firmly established as the American policy.

The party in power, ever claiming it can and will reform the tariff, while this chapter is being written, meets the demands of the farmers for lower taxes on the things they buy, with a bill for an additional tariff on certain farm produce, but adds an increased tax of one hundred per cent. on woolen and linen goods, and tin plate. The first part of

the proposition is a gratuitous insult to every farmer in the land; because not one of them but knows that no amount of tariff on breadstuffs and meat could increase the price a single cent, for the reason that foreign countries do not bring those articles here and offer them for sale. The other branch of the proposition actually doubles the price the farmers must pay for many of the most common necessaries of life. And this is called reforming the tariff, in the interest of the farmer, by the friends of tariff reform! There is, and there can be, judging by what has been done, and what is now proposed by the party in power, but one way to bring about this reform, and that is to retire that party and put in their places men pledged to vote for tariff reform.

The white light Mrs. Winters saw on her death-bed, the son believes, is lying dormant in the ballot-box, awaiting the time when the farmer and the wage-earner shall go forward in their strength and deposit their votes for men who favor tariff reform, to come forth and cover the land with the grandeur and glory so vividly pictured by the dying woman.

The fate of the farmer is in his own hands. It rests with him to say whether his star of destiny shall lead him from the abandoned farm and desolate home, into new and untried avocations, where ceaseless toil awaits him, or whether it shall shine upon an industry that insures a profitable return on the money and toil invested, with the comforts and pleasures, the hopes and ambitions, he and his desire, sure of realization.

# ABBAY SERIES

12mos. All complete and unabridged editions. Printed from new, perfect plates, in large type on good book paper. Handsomely bound in cloth, embossed with design in gilt and ink on front and back of cover, with side titles. RETAIL PRICE 25 CENTS

1.	Abbe Constantin.....	Ludovic Halevy
2.	Adam Bede.....	George Eliot
6.	Adventures of a Brownie.....	Miss Mulock
7.	Æsop's Fables.....	Æsop
8.	All Aboard.....	Oliver Optic
9.	Allan Quatermain.....	H. Rider Haggard
10.	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.....	Lewis Carroll
11.	American Siberia, The.....	J. C. Powell
12.	American Wit and Humor.....	Peck, Nye, and M. Quad
14.	Andersen's Fairy Tales.....	Hans Christian Andersen
16.	Angeline.....	J. N. Percival
20.	Attio Philosopher in Paris, An.....	Emile Souvestre
21.	Aurette.....	Henry Greville
24.	Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin.....	
25.	Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.....	Oliver Wendell Holmes
26.	Aunt Martha's Corner Cupboard.....	Mary and Elizabeth Kirby
29.	Back to the Old Home.....	Mary Cecil Hay
31.	Bacon's Essays.....	Sir Francis Bacon
37.	Bag of Diamonds.....	G. Manville Fenn
38.	Baled Hay.....	Bill Nye
39.	Banditti of the Prairies.....	Edward Bonney
40.	Barrack Room Ballads.....	Rudyard Kipling
41.	Bay Path.....	J. G. Holland
42.	Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush.....	Ian Maclaren
45.	Betsy Jane.....	H. E. Brown
46.	Beulah.....	Angusta J. Evans
47.	Black Beauty.....	Anna Sewall
49.	Black Rock.....	Ralph Connor
54.	Boat Club.....	Oliver Optic
55.	Biglow Papers.....	James Russell Lowell
55.	Book of Golden Deeds.....	Charlotte M. Yonge
67.	Boomerang, The.....	Bill Nye
68.	Elithedale Romance.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
59.	Bracebridge Hall.....	Washington Irving
61.	Brooks' Addresses.....	Phillips Brooks
62.	Browning's Poems.....	Robert Browning
64.	Burns' Poems.....	Robert Burns
66.	Called Back.....	Hugh Conway
69.	Cardinal Sin.....	Engene Sue
72.	Charlotte Temple.....	Susannah Rowson
73.	Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.....	Lord Byron
75.	Child's History of England.....	Charles Dickens
76.	Chimes and Christmas Carol.....	Charles Dickens
81.	Christian Living.....	F. B. Meyer
83.	Christian Year, The.....	John Keble
84.	Clemenceau Case.....	Alexandre Dumas
85.	Courtship of Miles Standish, The.....	Henry W. Longfellow
86.	Cousin Maude.....	Mary Jane Holmes
87.	Cranford.....	Mrs. Gaskell
91.	Cricket on the Hearth.....	Charles Dickens
92.	Crime of Phillip Guthrie, The.....	Lulu Ragdale
93.	Crown of Wild Olive.....	John Ruskin
94.	Captain of the Pole Star.....	A. Conan Doyle
95.	Daily Food for Christians.....	
99.	Departmental Ditties.....	Rudyard Kipling
102.	Deerslayer.....	James Fenimore Cooper
108.	Divorced.....	Madeline Vinton Dahlgren
104.	Dodo.....	E. F. Benson

106.	Dog Crusoe and His Master.....	R. M. Bahantyn
107.	Dog of Flanders, A.....	Guido
108.	Dolly Dialogues.....	Anthony Hope
110.	Dora Deane.....	Mary J. Holmes
112.	Uream Life.....	(Ik Marvel) Donald G. Mitchell
114.	Drummond's Addresses.....	Henry Drummond
115.	Duchess.....	(The Duchess) Mrs. Hungerford
116.	Elizabeth and Her German Garden.....	
118.	Emerson's Essays.....	Ralph Waldo Emerson
119.	Emerson's Poems.....	Ralph Waldo Emerson
120.	English Woman's Love Letters, An.....	
121.	English Orphans.....	Mary Jane Holmes
122.	Essays of Elia.....	Charles Lamb
123.	Esther Waters.....	George Moore
125.	Ethics of the Dust.....	John Ruskin
127.	Evangeline.....	Henry W. Longfellow
128.	Evil Eye, The.....	Theophile Gautier
131.	Fatal Love.....	Ramiriz Arias
132.	Fairyland of Science.....	Arabella Buckley
134.	Favorite Poems.....	Elmo
135.	Flower Fables.....	Louisa M. Alcott
137.	Fifteen Decisive Battles.....	Sir Edward Shepherd Creasy
139.	First Violin.....	Jessie Fothergill
140.	Forging the Fetters.....	Mrs. Alexander
141.	Frankenstein.....	Mary Shelley
143.	Garden of Verses, Child's.....	Robert Louis Stevenson
145.	Gold Dust.....	Charlotte M. Yonge
147.	Grandfather's Chair.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
148.	Green Dragon, At the.....	Beatrice Harraden
151.	Gulliver's Travels.....	Dean Swift
153.	Heir of Linne.....	Robert Buchanan
158.	Her Shattered Idol.....	Belle V. Logan
159.	Heroes and Hero Worship.....	Thomas Carlyle
161.	Hiawatha.....	Henry W. Longfellow
162.	Holmes' Poems.....	Oliver Wendell Holmes
163.	Homestead on the Hillside.....	Mary Jane Holmes
165.	House of Seven Gables.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
167.	House of the Wolf.....	Stanley J. Weyman
169.	How It Came About.....	Maja Spencer
171.	Hypatia.....	Charles Kingsley
173.	Ideala.....	Sarah Grand
174.	Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow.....	Jerome K. Jerome
176.	Idylls of the King.....	Alfred Tennyson
177.	Imitation of Christ.....	Thomas a Kempis
178.	In Chase of Crime.....	Du Boisgobey
179.	In Memoriam.....	Alfred Tennyson
180.	In the Rockies.....	W. H. G. Kingston
181.	Inez.....	Augusta J. Evans
182.	Ishmael, or, In the Depths.....	Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth
183.	Ivanhoe.....	Sir Walter Scott
184.	John Halifax.....	Miss Mulock
185.	Kept for the Master's Use.....	Frances Ridley Havergal
186.	Kidnapped.....	Robert Louis Stevenson
191.	King of the Golden River.....	John Ruskin
192.	Knickerbocker's History of New York.....	Washington Irving
194.	L'Americane.....	Jules Claretie
196.	Laddie and Miss Toosey's Mission.....	Author of Zoe
198.	Lady Grace.....	Mrs. Henry Wood
199.	Lady of the Lake.....	Sir Walter Scott
201.	Lalla Rookh.....	Thomas Moore
202.	Lamplighter.....	Maria S. Cummins
203.	Last Days of Pompeii.....	C. Bulwer-Lytton
204.	Last of the Mohicans.....	J. Fenimore Cooper
205.	La Veuve.....	Octave Feuillet
207.	Let Us Follow Him.....	Henry Sienkiewicz
208.	Lena Rivers.....	Mary Jane Holmes
209.	Light of Asla.....	Edwin Arnold



210.	Light That Failed.....	Rudyard Kipling
212.	Little Queen of Tragedy, A.....	Laura B. Marsh
214.	Lime Kiln Club.....	M. Quad
215.	Little Lame Prince.....	Miss Mulock
216.	Locksley Hall and Other Poems.....	Alfred Tennyson
219.	Longfellow's Poems.....	Henry W. Longfellow
223.	Lorna Doone.....	R. D. Blackmore
224.	Love and Tears.....	Arseme Houssaye
225.	Loyalty of Langstreth, The.....	John R. V. Gilliat
226.	Love Letters of a Worldly Woman.....	Mrs. W. K. Clifford
227.	Lucy's Wonderful Globe.....	Charlotte M. Yonge
229.	Lowell's Poems.....	James Russell Lowell
231.	Lucile.....	Owen Meredith
234.	Madame Sans-Genes.....	Victorien Sardou
235.	Maggie Miller.....	Mary Jane Holmes
236.	Marble Faun.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
237.	Maid, Wife or Widow.....	Mrs. Alexander
239.	Makers of Venice.....	Mrs. Oliphant
241.	Man from Wall Street.....	St. George Rathbone
243.	Man in Black.....	Stanley J. Weyman
244.	Marmion.....	Sir Walter Scott
245.	Micah Clarke.....	A. Conan Doyle
248.	Meadowbrook.....	Mary Jane Holmes
249.	Miss Milne and I.....	Jota
250.	Modern Quixote, A.....	S. C. McCay
251.	Moss-Side.....	Marion Harland
252.	Mosses from an Old Manse.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
253.	Mortgage Foreclosed, Tho.....	E. H. Thayer
254.	Mother's Cook Book.....	Harland
255.	Macarula.....	Augusta J. Evans
256.	Minister's Wooing.....	Harriet Beecher Stowe
257.	Mrs. Candle's Curtain Lectures.....	Douglas Jerrold
258.	My Lady's Money.....	Wilkie Collins
259.	Mysterious Juror.....	Du Boisgobey
261.	Nameless Love.....	Charles Lomon
263.	Natural Law in the Spiritual World.....	Henry Drummond
265.	Not Like Other Girls.....	Rosa N. Carey
266.	Now or Never.....	Oliver Optio
267.	Octoroon, The.....	Miss M. E. Braddon
268.	Old California Days.....	James Steel
269.	Oklahoma Scout, The.....	Theo. Baughman
270.	Origin of Species.....	Darwin
272.	Past and Present.....	Thomas Carlyle
273.	Paradise Lost.....	John Milton
275.	Pathfinder.....	J. Fenimore Cooper
279.	Paul and Virginia.....	Saint Pierre
281.	Peck's Boss Book.....	George W. Peck
282.	Perfume of the Violet, The.....	Frank H. Howe
283.	Peter Simple.....	Capt. Marryat
284.	Pilgrim's Progress.....	John Bunyan
285.	Pioneers.....	J. Fenimore Cooper
286.	Plain Tales from the Hills.....	Rudyard Kipling
287.	Pleasures of Life.....	Sir John Lubbock
288.	Poe's Poems.....	Edgar Allan Poe
289.	Poe's Tales.....	Edgar Allan Poe
290.	Polite Life and Etiquette.....	Henry Seton Merriman
291.	Prisoners and Captives.....	Jane Austen
292.	Pride and Prejudice.....	Stanley McKenna
293.	Prima Donna of the Slums, The.....	Rev. J. H. Ingraham
294.	Prince of the House of David.....	Alfred Tennyson
295.	Princess.....	Oliver Optio
296.	Poor and Proud.....	Oliver Wendell Holmes
297.	Professor at the Breakfast Table.....	J. Fenimore Cooper
298.	Prairie, The.....	George William Curtis
299.	Prue and I.....	John Ruskin
301.	Queen of the Air.....	Dr. John Brown
304.	Rab and His Friends.....	

905.	Representative Men.....	Ralph Waldo Emerson
907.	Revenge of Circe.....	Alexina Lorqugen
908.	Reveries of a Bachelor.....	(Ik Marvel) Donald G. Mitchell
909.	Robinson Crusoe.....	Daniel Defoe
912.	Rifle Rangers.....	Capt. Mayne Reid
913.	Rubaiyat of Omer Khayyam.....	Edward Fitzgerald
914.	Rosamond.....	Mary J. Holmes
915.	Royal Robber, A.....	Herbert Rau
922.	Scalp Hunters.....	Capt. Mayne Reid
926.	Six to Sixteen.....	Mrs. Juliana H. Ewing
927.	Samantha at Saratoga.....	Josiah Allen's Wife
928.	Sartor Resartus.....	Thomas Carlyle
929.	Scarlet Letter, The.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
930.	Self Raised, or, From the Depths.....	Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth
931.	Seneca's Morals.....	Sir Roger L'Estrange
932.	Sesamo and Lilies.....	John Ruskin
933.	Shadow of a Sin.....	Bertha M. Clay
934.	She's All the World to Me.....	Hall Caine
935.	Ships That Pass in the Night.....	Beatrice Harraden
936.	Sign of the Four.....	A. Conan Doyle
937.	Single Heart and Double Face.....	Charles Reade
938.	Singularly Deluded.....	Sarah Grand
939.	Six Gray Powders, The.....	Mrs. Henry Wood
940.	Sketch Book, The.....	Washington Irving
941.	Snow Image, The.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
942.	Squire's Darling.....	Bertha M. Clay
943.	Stickit Minister, The.....	S. R. Crockett
944.	Stories from the French.....	Guy de Maupassant and others
945.	Story of an African Farm.....	(Ralph Iroa) Olive Schreiner
946.	Strange Case of Henry Toplass.....	John W. Postgate
947.	Stronger than Death.....	Emile Richebourg
948.	Study in Scarlet.....	A. Conan Doyle
949.	Swiss Family Robinson.....	J. D. and J. R. Wyss
950.	Tales from Shakespeare.....	Charles and Mary Lamb
951.	Tales from the Odyssey.....	Walter C. Perry
952.	Tales from Tennyson.....	G. C. Allen
953.	Tanglewood Tales.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
954.	Three Men in a Boat.....	Jerome K. Jerome
955.	Thelma.....	Mario Corelli
956.	Through the Looking Glass.....	Lewis Carroll
957.	Tom Brown at Oxford.....	Thomas Hughes
958.	Tom Brown's School Days.....	Thomas Hughes
959.	Treasure Island.....	Robert Louis Stevenson
960.	True and Beautiful.....	John Ruskin
961.	Try Again.....	Oliver Optic
962.	Tempest and Sunshine.....	Mary Jane Holmes
964.	Twice Told Tales.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
965.	Under the Maples.....	Walter N. Hinman
966.	Uncle Tom's Cabin.....	Harriet Beecher Stowe
967.	Vashti and Esther.....	Author of Belle's Letters
968.	Vicar of Wakefield.....	Oliver Goldsmith
969.	Voyage of the Sunbeam.....	Lady Brassey
970.	Water Babies.....	Charles Kingsley
971.	Wedded and Parted.....	Bertha M. Clay
972.	What Will the World Say?.....	Mary Jane Holmes
973.	What Would You Do, Love?.....	Mary Jane Holmes
974.	Whittier's Poems.....	John Greenleaf Whittier
975.	White Company, The.....	A. Conan Doyle
976.	Wicked Girl, A.....	Mary Cecil Hay
977.	Wide, Wide World.....	Susan Warner
978.	Williams Brothers.....	Adrian Percy
979.	Window in Thrums.....	J. M. Barrie
980.	Wit, Humor and Pathos.....	Eli Perkins
981.	Wonder Book, The.....	Nathaniel Hawthorne
982.	Yellow Aster, The.....	Iota
983.	Youngest Soldier of the Grand Army.....	Du Boisgobey
991.	Zoe.....	Author of Laddie

# COMPLETE LIST OF THE POETIC AND PROSE WORKS

... OF ...

## ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

---

### POEMS OF POWER.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1 50

### POEMS OF PASSION.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1 50  
ILLUSTRATED EDITION—gilt top, 12mo, cloth..... 1 50  
ILLUSTRATED EDITION—gilt top, 12mo, white vellum, 2.00

"Only a woman of genius could produce such a remarkable work."—*Illustrated London News*.

### POEMS OF PLEASURE.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1 50

These poems make life doubly sweet and cheerful.

"Mrs. Wilcox is an artist with a touch that reminds one of Lord Byron's impassionate strains."—*Paris Register*.

### MAURINE.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1 50  
NEW ILLUSTRATED EDITION—12mo, cloth..... 1 50  
NEW ILLUSTRATED EDITION—white vellum, gold top, 2.00

Beautiful thoughts and healthy inspiration in every line.

"Maurine is an ideal poem about a perfect woman."—*The South*.

### KINGDOM OF LOVE AND OTHER POEMS.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1 50

A choice collection of recitations, specially compiled for readers and impersonators.

"Her name is a household word. Her great power lies in depicting human emotions; and in handling that grandest of all passions—love, she wields the pen of a master."—*The Saturday Record*.

## WORKS OF ELLA WHEELER WILCOX—Continued.

---

### THREE WOMEN.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 1.50  
Her latest and greatest poem. This marvelous narrative of thrilling interest depicts the lives of three good and beautiful women in every phase of *weakness, passion, pride, love, sympathy,* and *tenderness.*

### AN ERRING WOMAN'S LOVE.

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth.....\$1.00  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum..... 1.50  
"Power and pathos characterize this magnificent poem. A deep understanding of life and an intense sympathy are beautifully expressed."—*Tribune.*

### EVERY-DAY THOUGHTS IN PROSE AND VERSE.

*Her largest, latest and greatest work.*

PRESENTATION EDITION—12mo, cloth, gold top.....\$1.50  
NEW GIFT EDITION—white vellum, gold top..... 2.00

### MEN, WOMEN AND EMOTIONS.

(Prose.) 12mo, heavy enameled paper cover.....\$0.50  
English cloth..... 1.00  
A skillful analysis of social habits, customs, and follies.  
"Her fame has reached all parts of the world, and her popularity seems to grow with each succeeding year."—*American Newsmen.*

### AN AMBITIOUS MAN.

(Prose.) Silk cloth, 12mo.....\$1.00  
"Vivid realism stands forth from every page of this fascinating book."—*Every Day.*

### THE BEAUTIFUL LAND OF NOD.

(Poems, songs, and stories.) With over sixty original illustrations. Silk cloth.....\$1.00  
The delight of the nursery. A charming mother's book.  
"The foremost baby's book of the world."—*New Orleans Picayune.*

### PRESENTATION SETS.

Poems of Passion, Maurine, Poems of Pleasure, Kingdom of Love, and Poems of Power are supplied in sets of 3, 4, or 5 titles, in cloth, or white vellum bindings, as may be desired, in neat boxes, without extra charge.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX is pre-eminently America's leading emotional poet and writer on every-day topics.

---

FOR SALE BY ALL BOOKSELLERS







UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 127 998 3



